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PLO: The End At Last — *David Pryce-Jones*

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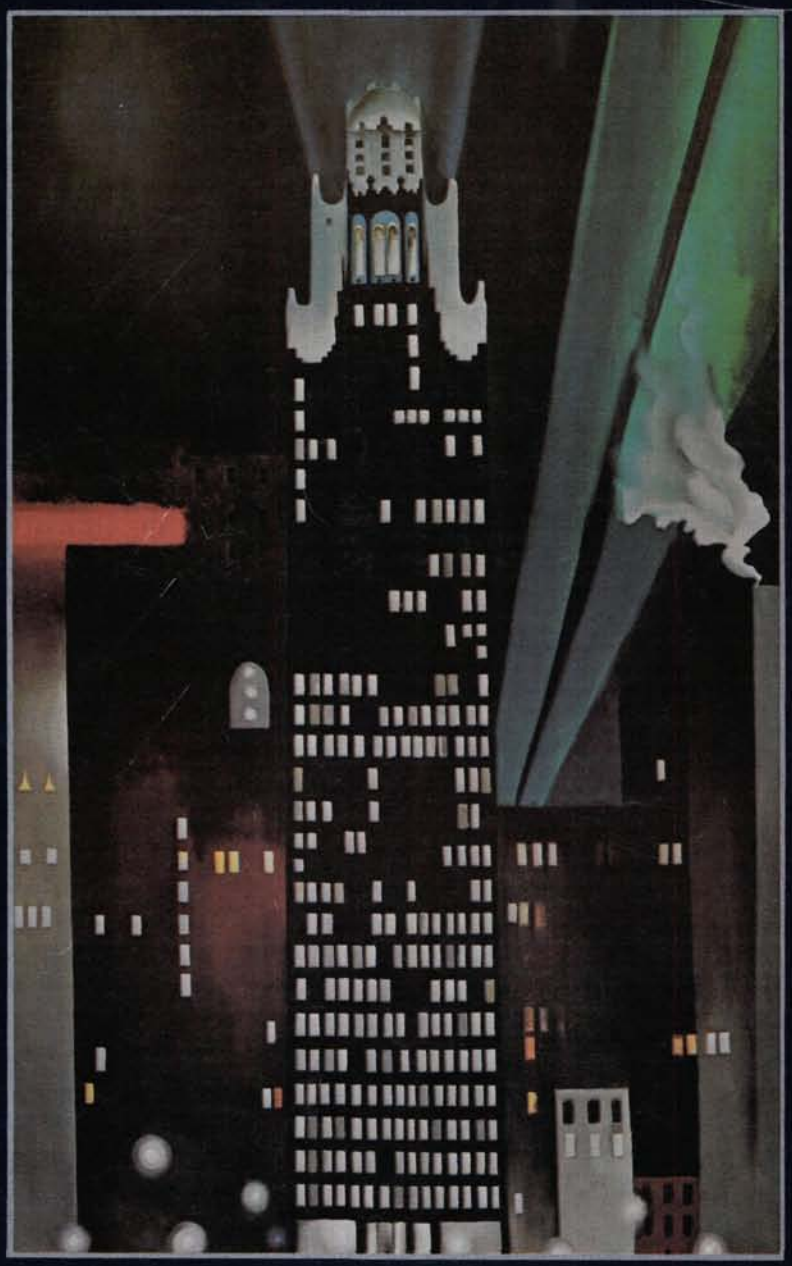

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Walter Goodman

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from Washington ®
January 21, 1978

Familiar Sentiments

The State of the Union speech is an art form to which President Carter makes his contribution Thursday January 19. Normally the speech is a work of fancy and imagination. Nothing brings back old days so poignantly as this pompous occasion. Grover Cleveland said, "It is a condition that confronts us, not a theory" (1887), and Warren Harding observed, "The day is unlikely to come when the 18th [Prohibition] Amendment will be repealed" (1922). Let's run through some of them to see how much alike, and different, they are.

I have, for example, all eight Eisenhower speeches before me from a crumbling portfolio, with my own marks indicating Congressional applause. The joint session in 1953, with a Republican majority, welcomed the war hero who had just won the election and he electrified them by saying he was "unleashing the Seventh Fleet." What a roar that brought. It sounded fine but even then it was a little hard to know what he meant.

Ike next sounded the recurrent, yearning theme of such speeches. "The first order of business," he said, "is the elimination of the annual deficit."

Next year his speech was applauded 50 times, and he told them of the cold war, in which "that precious intangible, the initiative, is becoming ours." (Cheers). I sat over the General in the press gallery; when he asked Congress to increase the debt limit I noted, rather unkindly, "No applause."

Democrats had won Congress in 1955 but they gave the beloved figure a hearty reception. He told them, "The aspirations of most of our people can best be fulfilled through their enterprise and initiative, without government interference." That is always an applause line.

In 1956 the speech was read by a clerk. A year later after triumphant re-electi Ike was back in person. He always w having trouble with the business cycl and had three recessions in eight year but he told them anyway, "Ou economy is strong, expanding an fundamentally sound."

The Russian Sputnik gave America scare and in 1958 Ike made one of thos statements that were greatly admirec "The only answer to a regime that wage total war," he said, "is to wage tota peace." That brought cheers, and I jotte down "Meaning?" in the margin, an find it still elusive. The budget defici that year, incidentally, was $12.5 billion

Ike assured the nation next year tha his latest recession was "fading into history," and that this had been achieved without hasty public works or "untimely tax reductions." He promised "a balanced budget for the next year." Unfortunately it didn't come in 1960. Instead, the final Eisenhower recession began in May, and helped to defeat Nixon that fall. Nevertheless the people loved Ike and got comfort out of his grin and his confidently delivered State of the Union addresses.

It was Kennedy's turn in 1961. After a little more than a week in office he broke the bad economic news: "The American economy is in trouble." He had something even more shocking than that: "Communist agents . . . have established a base on Cuba only 90 miles from our shore." We all know what that led to. It had nothing to do with the Bay of Pigs, but Kennedy in the same speech first used the phrase "Alliance for Progress."

In 1962 Camelot was in full sway and King Arthur, that is Kennedy, told the nation that the economy was brighter. "Speculative fever is ending," he said, "and confidence in the dollar has been restored."

About the first reference to Vietnam—a theme that was to recur, to be slurred over, or lied about, for years—came in the State of the Union speech of January 1963. Yes, Kennedy said, "The spearpoint of aggression has been blunted in Vietnam." Things were always ending in Vietnam even before they had begun.

Lyndon Johnson's speech in 1964, seven weeks after Kennedy's assassination, was one of the most poignant and best I ever heard; I like to re-read it for it was before LBJ got all tangled up in Vietnam. "This administration here and now," he said, "declares unconditional war on poverty in America!" He boldly

(continued on page 37)

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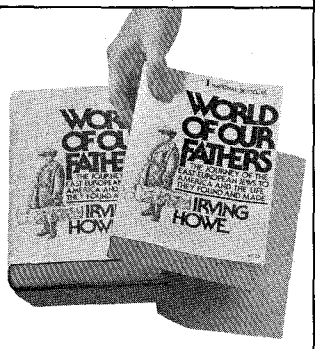

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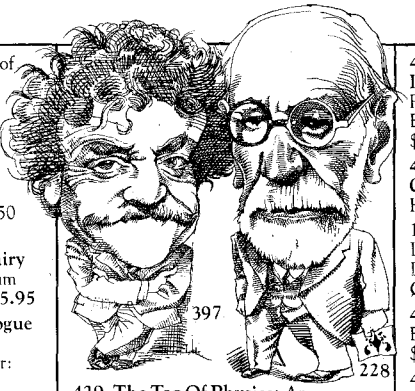

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

January 21, 1978

Communist Quagmire

Something about Indochina encourages American overreaction. Our officials are forever reading global significance into Indochinese developments, almost always to their regret. We are finished responding to these misperceptions militarily, thank heavens, but Zbigniew Brzezinski has demonstrated again American officialdom's eagerness to see events in Indochina as illustrations of their pet schematic theories. When asked on a Sunday television show about the border warfare between Vietnam and Cambodia, Brzezinski replied: "I find it very interesting, primarily as the first case of a proxy war between China and the Soviet Union. The Vietnamese are clearly supported by the Soviet Union politically and militarily and the Cambodians are supported politically and perhaps militarily by the Chinese." The Soviets immediately scolded Brzezinski for trying to "whip up animosity" between the Communist powers, and the Carter administration quickly sought through all its foreign policy spokesmen to downplay the suggestion that it believes the Soviets and Chinese instigated the conflict between their clients.

In fact, it requires no Soviet or Chinese inspiration, nor any American involvement, for Vietnamese and Cambodians to kill each other. These are not the gentle, peace-loving peoples represented during the Indochina war as having been defiled and turned to unaccustomed violence by foreign interference. They are ancient enemies with a record of warfare that dates back to the 12th century, when the Cambodian emperor who built Angkor Wat launched three unsuccessful invasions against what is now Vietnam, only to have Cambodia's capital sacked in return. With the decline of the Khmer empire in the 15th century, Cambodia was gradually dismembered by the Thais and the Vietnamese. The late historian Bernard B. Fall observed that Vietnam's colonial occupation of Cambodia in the 18th and 19th centuries "amounted to veritable genocide." Only with the establishment of a French protectorate in 1863 was Cambodia's identity secured, and even after that, French border-drawing decisions tended to favor the more pesky Vietnamese at Cambodia's expense.

Vietnamese-Cambodian hostility did not abate even during the period of American military presence in the region. When US and South Vietnamese troops launched their "incursion" into Cambodia's Parrot's Beak in 1970, Cambodians took the opportunity to butcher thousands of ethnic Vietnamese civilians living in their territory, using alleged Communist sympathies as a pretext for a pogrom. At the same time, the Phnom Penh government protested that South Vietnamese troops were raping and murdering Cambodian civilians and pillaging their villages. The anti-Communist Lon Nol government in Cambodia feared the presence of anti-Communist South Vietnamese forces on its territory as well as that of North Vietnamese Communists. Cambodia's previous ruler, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, likewise harbored deep concern that North Vietnamese forces never would leave Cambodia. In 1973, Communist Khmer Rouge forces were shooting at Communist North Vietnamese in the area. This conflict is not ideological. The Cambodians and Vietnamese hate each other nationally.

The current rulers of Cambodia—now renamed Democratic Kampuchea—are nationalistic to a wild, xenophobic extreme. They let few foreigners in or refugees out. Their troops have launched barbarous border attacks both on Thai and Vietnamese villages, showing no mercy to the aged, to women or to infants. In one series of raids last September, they reportedly killed as many as 1000 civilians. Cambodia's behavior seems born of madness, given Vietnam's superior strength. Vietnam has five times Cambodia's population. Its armed forces are the well-trained and battle-hardened winners of two long wars and are equipped with two-billion-dollars-worth of left-behind American military hardware, in addition to material furnished by their Communist allies.

There was every reason to expect that Vietnam would retaliate following Cambodian attacks. Victory was assured, and would demonstrate Vietnamese primacy in Indochina. War often serves as a distraction

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from domestic woes, and Vietnam is experiencing food shortages and other economic difficulties. Friction reportedly exists between North and South Vietnamese, and a common struggle against Cambodians may ease it. This generation of leadership in Hanoi may not be gifted in the administration of a country at peace, but it is experienced in—perhaps even habituated to—war. Now it can demonstrate its military mastery anew. Cambodia has accused Vietnam of trying to overthrow its government. Presumably Vietnam would not object to a less rabid and more Vietnam-tilting group in power at Phnom Penh. In the absence of that, Vietnam probably would be only too happy to resume control of the Cambodian Parrot's Beak, which juts as close as 30 miles to Vietnam's number-two city of Saigon (a.k.a. Ho Chi Minh City). Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia over the past two months—with some 60,000 troops commanded by the legendary Vo Nguyen Giap—seems to have accomplished this limited end.

The Soviet Union and the Peoples Republic of China are involved in this conflict, but not (so far as American scholars and government officials can tell) as initiators. China is Cambodia's ally—virtually its only one—but China repeatedly drops hints that it finds Cambodia's super-Communism a bit extreme. China also has an interest in maintaining influence in Vietnam, if only to counterbalance Soviet predominance. Vietnam gets an estimated $500 million a year in economic assistance from the Soviet Union and $300 million from China, and presumably finds it useful to play off its two antagonistic benefactors against each other. That the Vietnamese prefer the Soviet Union as a benefactor is only natural: Russia is far away and has no history, as China does, of 1000 years of hegemony over Vietnamese territory.

There is little to indicate that this is even a political proxy conflict between the Communist superpowers, let alone a military one. The Soviet Union has tended to repeat Vietnam's charges against Cambodia and to quote foreign reporting favorable to Vietnam. China, on the other hand, has tended to give even-handed treatment to the conflict, and last week began giving prominent attention to Vietnamese calls for a ceasefire. Cambodia claimed to have killed two blond Caucasians in a tank and to have heard battlefield radio broadcasts in Russian. Since the Vietnamese did not need Soviet advisers when they were fighting the United States, however, it is hard for anyone to credit the Cambodian allegations now.

Brzezinski's claim to see the fighting between Vietnam and Cambodia as a proxy war, we suspect, arises from the National Security Adviser's preoccupation, during President Carter's world trip, with a real proxy conflict in the Horn of Africa. The war between Ethiopia and Somalia came up in Carter's discussions in Saudi Arabia and Iran, and perhaps also in Egypt. Ethiopia is allied with the Soviet Union now, and is getting help from Cuba, too. Somalia, having ejected Soviet advisers, is getting arms from the Saudis a other anti-Communist Arabs, but not from the Unit States. The Carter administration presumably has be looking for a way to give more help to US allies who a helping Somalia, establishing a proxy relationsh second-hand. Brzezinski, we suppose, had proxies the brain when he was asked about Indochina and tl word popped out.

It was an error, but one that serves a useful end: that of reminding the world that the West is n exclusively responsible for miseries visited upon th people of Vietnam and Cambodia and that Communi superpowers, having claimed to the world how peac loving they were when the war was our affair, no have the opportunity and responsibility to give peace chance.

White House Watch

Chasing Symbols

The day and the hour when President Carter's secon trip abroad was reduced in what passes for the nationa media mind to a shambles and nearly but not quite los its chance of recognition for what it turned out to be, moderate success on a meat-and-potatoes level, may b noted precisely thanks to the frugal Carter Whit House's diminished but still surviving capacity fo recording essential events. The place was conferenc room 450 on the top floor of the Old Executive Offic Building, next door to the White House. The minut according to the official record was 11:10 a.m. Th person briefing a large number of journalists an talking into an array of television cameras and radi microphones suddenly ceased to be Zbigniew Brzezinski, the President's assistant for nationa security affairs, and became "an American official."

This was the morning of December 20, eight days before President Carter left for Warsaw. The details o that morning were mostly ignored then. They are noted now because they and what lay behind them have much to do with the Carter trip and with the state o affairs at the top of the Carter White House.

Brzezinski and his press spokesman, Jerrold Schecter, were scowling at each other and at the assembled reporters, cameramen and technicians and White House hangers on when Brzezinski and Schecter entered. Schecter, a distinguished *Time* diplomatic correspondent who has not equally distinguished himself as an NSC spokesman, announced after a prolonged silence that Dr. Brzezinski would be

(continued on page 8)

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Correspondence

loss of trillions

the editors:

our editorial "Guaranteed Jobs for onomists," (*TNR*, Dec. 17, 1977) smissed the Humphrey-Hawkins Full nployment Bill as just "promises" and nore jargon," and suggested that its id result will simply be to increase the le of economists in determining our nployment policy. The labor, religious, vil rights, and other organizations hich make up the Full Employment ction Council profoundly disagree ith your assessment.

The Humphrey-Hawkins Full mployment Bill makes the achieve- ent of full employment the central riority of national economic life. It rovides an overall framework for a oncentrated and flexible attack on blessness. It is an essential first step oward full employment, and an enor- ous improvement over current law nd policy.

This legislation, if enacted, will com- it this nation and its leaders to specific argets of three percent adult un- mployment and four percent overall mployment by 1983, and mandate the resident and the Congress to pursue olicies to achieve these targets and enuine full employment. This legisla- on will permit us to measure, year by ear, the progress of particular policies nd programs against specific goals and ill also document the need for ad- itional job-creating programs outlined the legislation.

This legislation exacts much more han "promises" from the President. hile the President is free to select his r her own mix of programs, compliance ith the targets and timetables is not ptional. If the Administration's efforts il to reach the mandated goals and metables for the reduction of un- mployment, then the federal govern- ent is required by the legislation to reate additional jobs directly. oreover, the President could not hange the objectives nor modify the oals or timetable, without the approval f Congress.

We agree that "the economist's view is ot necessarily clearer than the olitician's" and that is why we believe it time to put an end to the cynical rocess of economists and politicians redefining full employment as five, six, or even seven percent in order to explain the failure of particular economic policies. We will not accept some economists' view that we "cannot afford" to give Americans the opportunity to earn a livelihood. We believe that it is time for our nation's leaders to say that we *"cannot afford"* is an economic policy which robs this nation of trillions of dollars in lost goods and services and which denies its people the chance to contribute to their society.

Clearly, no one bill will "solve" our unemployment problem and its tragic human and economic costs. More work will be required to translate this legislation into meaningful jobs at decent wages for all American workers. However, without this legislation, those battles will probably remain unfought and our nation shall grow ever more accustomed to the enormous waste of our material and human resources represented by massive joblessness. This bill establishes this country's commitment to a job for every American able and willing to work and lays the foundation for the policies and programs needed to fulfill that commitment. Its passage would be a major step toward a more just, productive and humane America.

Murray H. Finley
Coretta Scott King
Full Employment Action Council
Washington, DC

Mao's vocabulary

To the editors:

As much as I admire Prof. Chalmers Johnson's scholarly work, I fear his recent article "Wide of the Mark," (*TNR*, Nov. 26, 1977) lived up to its title. His critique of American reporting on China over the last year leads me to wonder if he has been confining his newspaper reading to the *Berkeley Barb*. He said, "according to our journalistic China experts . . . everything in China is just fine now." Several people here have filed reams of copy in the past year on China's political, economic and social troubles and I can't believe Prof. Johnson has missed all of it. I concede he is right to point to a lack of historical comparisons in American reporting, something for which we should all try to carve out more space.

What really upsets me, however, is Prof. Johnson's outrageous attempt to take credit for first telling the world of the late Chairman Mao's use of a word which translates into a certain pungent Anglo-Saxonism. Peking's publication of Mao's remark was the highlight of an otherwise dull week for several of us covering Secretary of State Vance's China visit. I had a story about it in the August 26, 1977 *Washington Post*, and lots of other reporters mentioned it, if for no other reason than it presented a golden opportunity to test our editors' current attitude toward That Word. My paper rendered it "s—," but others were braver.

Jay Mathews
The Washington Post
Hong Kong

Sowing discontent

To the editors:

While your editorial, "Carter and the Farmers," (*TNR*, Jan. 7) points to the

(continued on page 38)

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quotable on the record for a while and that "American officials" would then take over the briefing. Having fought out plural "officials" versus a single official back in 1969 with Henry Kissinger and having got his agreement that reporters should not be committed to the small lie that "officials" were saying what one "official" actually was saying, I raised the petty matter with Schecter. Helen Thomas of UPI joined me and Schecter invited her to "leave the room" if she didn't find plural "officials" acceptable. It ended that we could quote "an American official" but not "a senior American official," an absurdity that is recalled here only because this sort of asininity and its effect upon the traveling press corps—let me say right here, a spoiled lot if there ever was one—colored the coverage and public impression of the Carter trip.

Here, in the trip's aftermath, is the place for a summary of the positives before getting into the preludes and into the screwups that in some instances were more than merely interesting and told or should have told Carter and his people a lot they need to know about themselves and their White House operation. The word used by Carter assistants who talked with him on the flight home from Brussels to Washington and described his personal mood, apart from the mood reflected in an airborne interview, was "exuberant." He was full of the details, more personal than consequential, of his talks with Gierek in Warsaw, the Shah and Hussein in Tehran, Desai in Delhi, King Khalid and Prince Fahd in Riyadh, Sadat in Aswan, Giscard and Mitterand in Paris. *They liked him.* He'd met some of them before. But to find in their countries that they liked him as Jimmy Carter and respected him as President of the United States—that was something. Sounds silly, pretentious, self-serving, but it was rather nice as it came from the spokesmen. On Air Force One, heading from Brussels to Washington on the last evening, he heard of a reporter to whom he had spoken once in Georgia before the 1976 election and never in Washington. The reporter was in a Paris hospital, recovering from his own follies and the rigors of the trip. Carter tried to telephone him. It didn't work, but it was a gracious and appreciated effort.

Back to the negative horrors, which anyhow are more fun to write about and, perhaps subconsciously, conditioned the reported perceptions of the trip. Here we have a talented and honored academician, elevated to advisory eminence at the White House, discussing a Warsaw monument to Poland's unknown soldier that Nixon visited in 1959 and 1972 and Ford visited in 1975, along with two other monuments that they seem to have overlooked: "These monuments do in a way convey a variety of messages, all of which [show] that history in Poland is a living thing." And: "In Iran the President will be feted at a palace [which] is to some extent a symbol of the rebirth of Iran." The eminent American official made a little more sense when he mentioned Ram Lila, a community meeting ground Delhi, and the Gandhi Mausoleum, which Carter w also to visit, and said: "If India falters on the way modernity, through democracy, indeed one can a oneself the question: is democracy the answer to t quest for modernity?" Thanks in considerable part the official who cannot be identified as Zbignie Brzezinski, Carter asserted in his best speech ai performance of the trip that democracy can provide tl answer. The same official fell to his vacuous low—low, one repeats, that is worth recording only because explains the minuses of what really and on the who was a plus trip—when he said in Washington: "I Versailles, the dinner at which he [the President] will b present will remind us of the past glories of France What is there to say to this except, Jesus H. Chris Carter later said he gloried in the evening at Versaille the crowds that acclaimed him, and all that preceded i the luxury that embedded him and Rosalynn fror Wilinow Palace in Warsaw to the summer palace i Tehran to the sometime British Viceroy's palace i Delhi to King Khalid's guest palace in Riyadh. The were all, he said on his way home on Air Force On comfortable. Mrs. Carter, eyes closed and seemingl asleep on his knee as he talked to the reporters, had sai earlier that she also enjoyed the accomodations.

Here we come to the White House scene that wa reflected in the pre-trip briefings. Brzezinski in his on record person had preceded the American official background briefing with what to any university clas or even to a seminar of otherwise unpreoccupie Washington journalists might have been a welcome hour of dissertation upon the enormous economi demographic, political and social change engulfing ou world. The expressed feeling among journalists wh were exposed to this disquisition, probably flatterin themselves, was that they didn't need the lecture an were insulted by it. Anyhow it affected relationship with Brzezinski and his spokeman, Schecter, during th trip. It indirectly contributed to an ugly quarre between Schecter at one of the final trip briefings i Europe and reporters who felt that he was trying to te them what they should and shouldn't ask their offici betters. More importantly, it reflected a tensio between Brzezinski and some of his peers at the Carte White House that developed during the months whe this trip and its cancelled predecessor, the one that wa to have taken Carter to Venezuela, Brazil and Nigeri before he visited the other places, were being plannec

The tension is mainly between Brzezinski and hi National Security Council staff on the one hand an two of Carter's chief assistants, Press Secretary Jod Powell and Hamilton Jordan. Jordan is in passing but doubt lasting difficulty because of a marital spli between him and his wife Nancy, a situation that i probably as distasteful but is not as strange to tha devoted pair, Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter, as Carte mythologists might have it appear to be. Jordan turne

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› in Saudi Arabia when Carter was there not to tell m about the separation—an event Carter had been pecting for weeks—but to fill him in on the stateside olitical impact of the trip up to then. Vice President 'alter Mondale and the President's ubiquitous chief ade negotiator and master kibitzer, Robert Strauss, gure with Powell and Jordan in the weirdest White ouse directorial mishmash that I've observed since ıe 1930s. Carter thrusts all of them into domestic, oreign policy and foreign intelligence matters. Powell nd Jordan in particular, and the others to a lesser xtent, have been insisting for months that Brzezinski nd, at a distance somewhat removed from the White Iouse heats, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, provide pportunities to evaluate and anticipate the domestic olitical impacts of foreign policy positions and actions efore they are set and announced. A minor and idiculous example of the demand for political pre-valuation arose after hard-nosed Hungarian anti-Communists and Senator Robert Dole raised hell over he administration's sensibile decision to return the Crown of St. Stephen to the Hungarian government. Secretary Vance completed this belated act of decent liplomacy while Carter was flying home. There were omplaints from White House quarters close to Brzezinski's West Wing office that here was a typical xample of NSC and State indifference to political ealities that only such as Powell and Jordan could omprehend. An earlier complaint was that the joint JS-Soviet statement of Middle East purpose in November also ignored political realities. It at least cknowledged the reality that the Soviet government nust be co-chairman of any Geneva conference that nay be called to conclude and ratify a Middle East ettlement.

The first of the snafus that enlivened a generally worthwhile and rather dullish trip occurred when Polish First Secretary Edward Gierek and Carter spoke n a cold wind and rain at the Warsaw airport. A young nterpreter who turned out to be Steven Seymour, a ontract translator with the State Department who had ecently accompanied Secretary of Commerce Juanita Kreps to Warsaw and served her well, interpreted Carter's arrival statement sentence by sentence, as the President took care to instruct him just before eginning his distinctly ordinary speech. The unfor-unate Seymour said later that nobody told him the ollowing day that anything had gone wrong. Plenty ıad. At a midnight cocktail party for the visiting press, gleeful Poles spread the news that Seymour in classical ınd outmoded Polish had had Carter "abandoning" nstead of just leaving the United States and lusting ıfter Polish ladies instead of merely desiring to get to know the country and its people.

At a press conference open equally to Polish and American questioners, a Pole said to be a student of Gierek's interpreter provided a flawless simultaneous translation of queries in Polish and Carter's answers in English. It was a remarkable performance. Carter gracefully balanced a defense of American principles and his belief in human rights with his duty—a duty that a few American reporters did their best to complicate for him with what I thought were unnecessarily needling questions—to make his points without gratuitously offending a host government that he, after all, had chosen to visit. Carter said at the start of the press conference that some dissident questioners had been refused admittance and promised that "their questions will be answered by me in writing." Assistants later drafted and Carter initialed innocuous answers to three rather pallid questions submitted in writing. A typical answer said in part, "I think it inappropriate for me to comment on the internal politics of another country." Poland's national radio and television broadcast the conference without change. The official Communist newspaper watered down some of the references to human rights and Polish-Soviet relationships but did a fair job of conveying the total sense in a published text. Again, however, a state dinner for the Carters that night was not a happy occasion for the interpreter who had done so well at the press conference. Attending American reporters—they were restricted to a small "pool"—thought Carter glared at the interpreter when he seemed to fumble the first sentence or two of the President's toast. The interpreter never recovered and Gierek's interpreter took over. A White House official later said this had been planned all along. It didn't look that way to the watching reporters.

With the notable exception of Carter's last afternoon and evening in Paris and Versailles, the crowds along the President's way nowhere near compared in numbers and enthusiasm with the mobs that greeted Dwight Eisenhower, Jackie Kennedy and Nixon in India, Nixon and Ford in Warsaw and Nixon in Tehran. Carter's routes in Warsaw were not announced in advance and some access streets were blocked off. But a Polish foreign ministry official had two explanations that seemed sensible. First, American presidents were getting to be familiar and slightly tiresome visitors. Second, people beset by meat and other shortages had just worn themselves out trying to put together a decent Christmas for themselves and weren't keen to go trudging through cold rains and winds to get a glimpse—more was seldom available to ordinary folk—of Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter. Rosalynn, incidentally, drew a bigger crowd during a chill walk through Old Warsaw than Jimmy ever attracted there. In Tehran, the Shah simply and obviously didn't mobilize the magnificent lines of mounted and foot guards with which he'd lined the streets for Nixon. In Delhi, the day of arrival and principal display was a Sunday and the people who were out by the thousands were there because they wanted to be and not because they'd been told to be. They were friendly, curious, passive and

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small in numbers, compared with the millions and millions who overwhelmed and frightened Eisenhower and Nixon, not to mention their press entourages, during their Delhi visits.

Carter just plain bombed at his first speech in Delhi, on a community meeting ground known as Ram Lila. An embarrassed Indian spokesman said later that "Indian crowds do not applaud." Brzezinski said it was never intended to be much of a speech anyhow. Indian crowds do applaud—this one applauded Carter when he was introduced and his first of all too many references to the two years that his mother, Miz Lillian, served in India with the Peace Corps. At Ram Lila and elsewhere, he of course didn't mention the loathing Miz Lillian expressed in her letters home for well-off Indians who habitually let the poor die in misery on roads and streets. The speech was carefully prepared in Washington and was intended to be a prelude to his successful formal address at India's Parliament House—Parliament itself was not in session—the next day. It was clear to listening reporters that the Ram Lila crowd simply didn't connect with most of his high-minded sentiments.

The best publicized foulup of the trip occurred in Delhi and put Carter in an odd light. If there is one thing an American president should have known about India and its new prime minister, Morarji Desai, it was the Indian government's official and Desai's personal refusal to accept oversight and safeguards that might inhibit Indian use of nuclear fuel and technologies provided by the US and other suppliers. After the second of two private meetings with Desai, Carter filled in Secretary Vance before going into a general meeting with Indians and Americans. It was during one of the standard institutions of Presidential travel, a "photo opportunity" for television and still cameramen, a reporter or two, and audio engineers with microphones. Jody Powell and Jerrold Schecter stood behind Carter and Vance and also behind an NBC audio engineer with a long microphone thrust at Carter from the rear. Powell, disturbed but reluctant to order the man to a position where Carter would be aware of him, finally told the engineer to move. By then, though, the microphone had caught Carter saying to Vance that Desai had been unexpectedly stubborn about nuclear controls and adding: "When we get back [to Washington], I think we ought to write him a letter, just cold and very blunt." The engineer, a pooler, was obliged to and did make the tape generally available. It was a refreshing change from the usual "frank and cordial" gunk the press generally gets from such affairs and was getting from this one when the truth busted out. Powell first said the President was talking in the freedom of imagined privacy, implying that he'd been unfairly diddled. Early the next morning, over an after-dinner vodka, Powell told Martin Schram of *Newsday*: "Jimmy has just been bad for a long time about talking about substance during photo sessions. I kept telling him it could cause a problem some day. Now maybe h gotten the message."

During the homeward flight the President went ba to Brzezinski symbolism, as follows: "The trip w symbolic. It was a very sure and comforting feeling represent what I consider to be the greatest nation earth. We don't have any weakness that I feel requir me to artificially prove our strength. We don't have ar need that I feel that required me to take advantage someone else to meet our need. We don't have an feeling of superiority or domination over other natior with whom we visited. We genuinely treat them a equals, as partners, as people with whom we would lik to be even closer friends in the future. So it was a tri that was symbolic of the power and influence and th goodwill of the United States."

He didn't say the trip was necessary.

John Osborn

Pretenders to the Throne, II

The Hero of Panama

On his recent five-nation swing through Lati America, we were treated to some useful glimpses o presidential candidate Howard Baker's foreign policy a well as his negotiating tact. Baker opened in Panama, a by far the most important of the forty-odd senator who have visited that country lately. He met witl President Omar Torrijos, in what was perhaps the mos perplexing meeting Mr. Torrijos has yet had with a American. The Tennessee senator informed Torrijo that the treaties, as they now stand, have no chance o winning the two-thirds support required for ratificia tion in the US Senate. According to those wh accompanied Baker, Torrijos was surprised and unhap py to learn this fact. Then Baker, the minority leader i the Senate, proceeded to obtain at least the informa acquiescence of a foreign head of state to modification in the treaties already signed by President Carter, an these he announced to the press. Finally, Baker lef Panama still without saying whether he would suppor the treaties if they were modified. The Baker party o the Panama junket included Frank Moore, the head o President Carter's congressional liaison team who i obviously much underestimated in the nation's capital Moore knew where the sands were shifting on an issu of great political consequence to his boss, and he wa right on hand to chart the effects.

Howard Baker, 52, of Huntsville, Tennessee is i pursuit of the 1980 Republican presidential nomina

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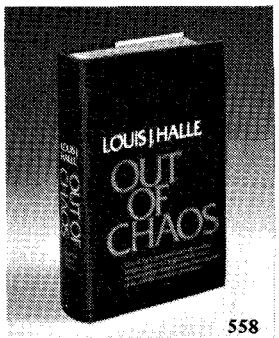

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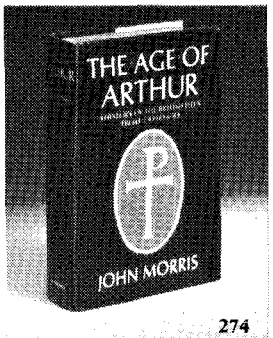

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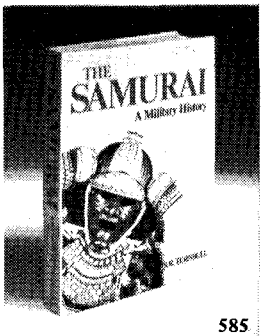

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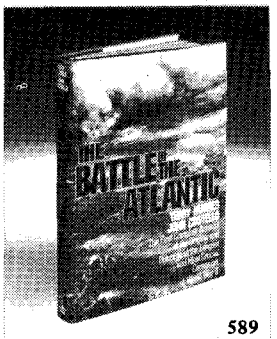

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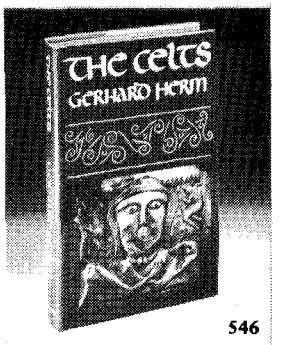

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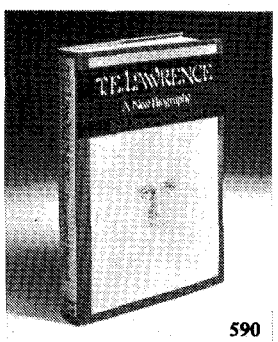

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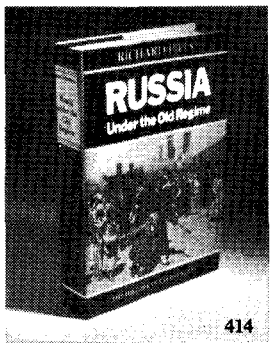

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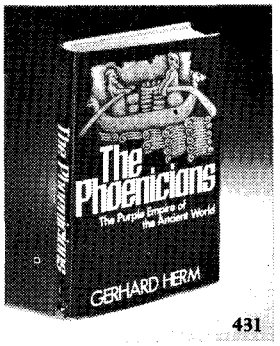

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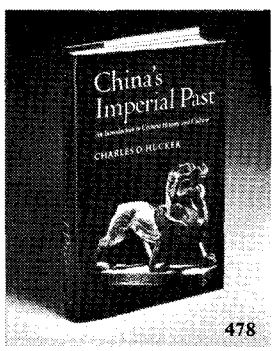

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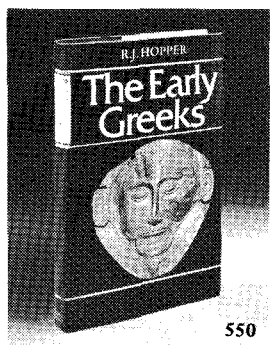

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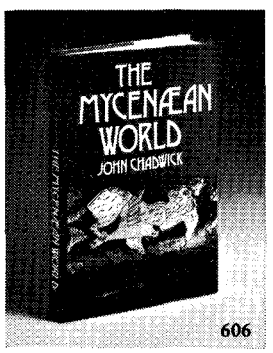

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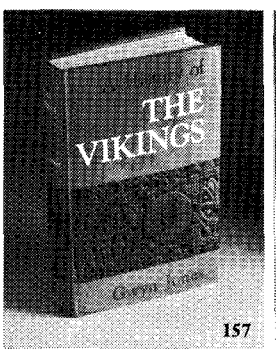

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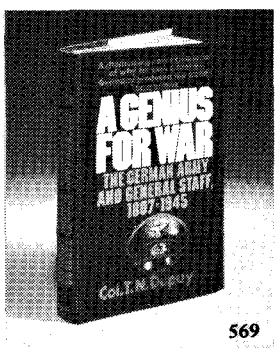

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tion, and there is an edge to his appetite.

The Republican party is in the phase that press agents for footballs teams call rebuilding—meaning the future is uncertain, but if there is to be one, it's not now. Under the circumstances, Baker knows that being minority leader is one of the few starting jobs worth having, one where the holder is automatically taken seriously and just about the only one in the out-party that provides a regular national forum to comment on the affairs of state. In his first year as leader he has won high marks for effectiveness. The successes that Baker himself claims during the first session of this Congress include President Carter's decision to scrap his proposed $50 rebate, for which Baker credits near-unanimous GOP opposition; and the filibuster Baker managed that killed administration attempts to extend public financing to congressional elections.

Baker's view of the minority leadership differs from that of his precedessor, Hugh Scott, whose main task for eight years under a Republican President consisted of rounding up enough votes to sustain a veto. By contrast, Baker operates on the belief that the function of the minority is to oppose—but also to develop the best alternatives possible and to get whatever elements you can of your own program melded into the outcome. Thus the Republican minority in the Senate constructed highly detailed alternative tax and energy programs, and some elements of both probably will find their way into the legislative compromises produced in the next session of Congress.

No small part of Baker's leadership success derives form his ability to forge an unusual degree of unity among Senate Republicans. On the GOP energy and tax packages, for example, and on election reform, only three of 38 Repubicans strayed to the other side of the aisle. Part of that unity is due to the numbers involved; the smaller the minority, the easier it is to get them to recognize that their common interest lies in sticking together. But however small the group, it's ideological breadth is impressive. The Senate Republican mix includes figures like Jesse Helms, Orrin Hatch and Strom Thurmond in almost equal parts with Jacob Javits, Clifford Case, Ed Brooke and suchlike. As a legislative conservative but not an ideological rightwinger, Baker himself stands, characteristically, right in the middle of this group. As regards Jimmy Carter's initiatives, he has evidently managed to sell both sides on his notion that with the Democrats divided, a measure of togetherness among Republican senators can make them "the biggest and most effective political group in Washington."

Not all of President Carter's frustrations are caused by Baker's sterling leadership, however. Indeed a fair amount of the success Baker claims having prevented "passing a bunch of bad legislation" comes from the fact that Democrats are indeed divided on most of Carter's major programs—energy (especially deregulation of natural gas), welfare and tax reform, the Panama Can treaties and the administration's strategic arm limitations proposals. During the first session of th 95th Congress, there was clear evidence of a reemerg ing conservative coalition of Republicans and souther Democrats, especially in the Senate. The straw boss o the Democratic side, Robert Byrd, turns out to be mor than a minor cog in that renewed coalition. On hi personal voting record, Byrd rang up one of the highes conservative scores of any northern Democrat. Majori ty leader Robert Byrd is his own man; he goes alon with the Democratic president when he can, but all to often he charts a separate course. So when the gooc soldier Tip O'Neill claims that this has been the mos productive Congress since just after the Kenned assassination, and it sounds to you like high fantasy well, divide the credit—or blame—for that between the Senate leadership of both parties.

Howard Baker obviously hopes to use the minority leadership to fortify his own position in the mainstream of the Republican party, to win re-election decisively in 1978 (he has no serious opposition in either the primary or general election), then to parlay himself into the sweepstakes for the top job in 1980. This is not the first time that presidential sugarplums have danced in the head of the genial, boyish, ever-more-portly senator. Catapulted into the limelight as vice chairman of the special Watergate committee, he flirted with running for the 1976 nomination. His backers then reasoned that with the Republican presidential base moving to the South and West, the border state Baker was perfectly situated. "I'm not going to consider that until these hearings are over," he kept saying, but once the kleig lights were turned off, people stopped asking and the rest is history. Then, for a time, Baker ruminated about not running for reelection in 1978, and, instead, mounting a Carter-like unencumbered two-year drive for the nomination. Carter's election dissipated any advantage Baker might have enjoyed as an almost southerner, and he chose instead to try for the minority leader job left vacant by Hugh Scott's retirement. Looking back on his first year in the job, Baker must be sure he made the right choice. He's tested it, and, yes, by golly, there's spring in the board.

Howard Baker has never considered a career in the Senate as the pinnacle of his political aspirations. After all, it's where he began. In 1964, Baker passed up a chance to inherit the East Tennessee congressional seat held by both his late father and mother (she finished the unexpired term). He opted instead for a long-shot run at the remaining two years of the expired Estes Kefauver's unexpired US Senate term. He lost, but tried again in 1966. Capitalizing on a split among the state's dominant Democrats, Baker became the first popularly elected Republican senator in Tennessee history. When Baker arrived in Washington, he cut his teeth as a freshman under the guidance of his own father-in-law, Everett Dirksen. Then Dirksen died and

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he position of minority leader passed to Dirksen's leputy, Hugh Scott, who found a youthful, ambitious Howard Baker anxious to get on with things. Each time he Republicans organized for a new Congress, the veteran Scott found the freshman Baker anxious to

Howard Baker by Vint Lawrence

unseat him. Baker tried twice (1969 and 1971) and lost twice. Eventually, with Scott in retirement and Carter in the White House, the GOP minority was ready for a change—for someone who could represent it on television, it is said—and this time Baker squeaked out a 19-18 win over the next man in line, Scott's loyal deputy, the uncharismatic, unphotogenic Robert Griffin.

From his new perch, where pronouncements of this sort are taken seriously, Howard Baker rates Jimmy Carter's first year on the job as mediocre. His own, he thinks, has been pretty good. Sizing up the President in his end-of-the-year report of the minority, Baker faulted the administration for too many proposals—proposals "which create more problems than they solve." Baker continued, "This style of policymaking is disruptive enough on domestic issues, but doubly so when applied to foreign policy." Within Republican circles, the Tennessee senator is seen as representing the eastern establishment, Council on Foreign Relations view on foreign policy, and Henry Kissinger is said to be one of his current advisers. As minority leader, he would prefer to be identified with the traditional Republican, "politics ends at the water's edge" stance—make foreign policy as nonpartisan as possible. But Baker hasn't implemented that policy consistently, nor very successfully. When Secretary of State Cyrus Vance went to the Soviet Union for his first discussions on SALT, for example, he met first with Baker and House minority leader Rhodes, and carried with him their assurances that the administration had bipartisan support for the sweeping changes in America's negotiating position that he laid on the table in Moscow. Baker admitted later that he actually had had no idea what the administration meant to propose and he had agreed to support, nor that it was to be presented to the Soviets without regard to such diplomatic niceties as prior notice.

On the Middle East, when Baker decided to disagree with Carter, his debut was unpromising. In a speech to the World Jewish Congress delivered at about the time the President had unnerved many Jews with his herky-jerky Middle East diplomacy and loose use of code words, Baker lambasted the White House for reintroducing Soviet influence into the area. In so doing, however, he also managed to misrepresent some aspects of Carter's initiative and misstate the substance of others. What the chief Republican spokesman in the Senate got for his trouble was not the high marks from the American Jewish community that he sought, but a rash of bad press including a *Washington Post* editorial that castigated Baker for "irresponsibility, insensitivity and plan ignorance," inexcusable even by the fever of presidential ambition.

With his prolonged straddle on the Panama Canal treaties, Howard Baker has generated for himself more national publicity, more mail from home and, perhaps, more political trouble than anything he's done since he twirled his eyeglasses on camera and repeatedly asked, "What did the President know and when did he know it?" The treaties are a visceral issue with rightwingers, and easily portrayed, they have found, as a cowardly and unnecessary giveaway. As a political issue, the canal is important mainly as an intramural item among Republicans; public opinion is generally opposed, but it's like gun control—only the "antis" care enough to make it a voting issue. Besides, polls indicate pretty consistently that nearly all of those who care deeply are too conservative ever to vote for your average Democrat anyway.

That's neither aid nore comfort to Howard Baker, whose presidential ambitions depend on being acceptable to both wings of the GOP. The conservatives have decided to use the treaties not only as a means of fattening up their mailing lists, but also as a litmus test for 1980. Reaganites and other conservatives believe they can make good their threat to deny the nomination to any Republican who backs the treaties, which the Ford wing of the party does. Both sides are fully aware that how the undecided minority leader finally comes out will probably determine the outcome. "Howard Baker is squirming like a worm on a hot brick," says an anti-treaty hardliner, Senator Jesse Helms.

What Baker is doing, meanwhile, is endlessly examining the merits while trying to find his way out of a political briar-patch somewhat of his own making.

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When he met with President Torrijos early this month, the senator was well prepared. For several months he has been briefed by two paid consultants, experts arguing both sides of the treaty question. Arguing for ratification is William Rogers, a Democrat who was assistant secretary of state for Latin American affairs under Gerald Ford. Politically, Rogers is an interesting choice. Aside from Kissinger and Ford, he was the only person Ronald Reagan attacked by name throughout the 1976 campaign. In his official capacity, Rogers was then involved in moves to normalize US relations with Cuba. Bidding for the votes of anti-Castro Cubans in the Florida primary, Reaganites characterized Rogers as a McGovernite who had "insinuated himself into the State Department." Rogers believes that America's basic interest in Panama is in keeping the canal open, and he urges upon Baker his view that the treaties are the best way to accomplish that. He also believes that there is more at stake for the Republicans than just the controversy over the canal. "The very centerpiece of the Republican image in this country is that they can manage foreign relations," he says, "and those best qualified in that regard—Henry Kissinger and Gerald Ford—have endorsed these treaties without reservation."

Baker's other adviser is Roger Fontaine, an expert on Latin America from the Georgetown Center for Strategic and International Studies. The changes he'd like to see incorporated into the treaties comprise a much longer list than Baker pressed on Torrijos, but Fontaine also warns that any changes must be specifically approved by the Panamanians in a second plebiscite, not merely tacked on as reservations or understandings. "Outside his own government, Torrijos is regarded as dictatorial, corrupt and a violater of human rights," says Fontaine. "Torrijos would like to tidy things up without another vote, but if there's no second plebiscite, a future Panamanian government could legitimately charge that both the people and the constitution were betrayed."

Some Republicans, not all of them conservatives, see Baker's hired counsel and his inability to resolve the Panama issue as entirely characteristic. Baker once was asked if he wanted a Supreme Court appointment, but procrastinated so long that Richard Nixon passed him over. Then, setting aside the questionable John Dean-Sam Dash charges that he was working both sides of the street as a secret White House agent, he did have a difficult time making up his mind on Watergate. "It's a congenital flaw," says one GOP strategist. There is a little story that Baker tells about himself that illustrates his fabled ambivalence. It seems he studied engineering in the service. After World War II, he intended to go on for an advanced degree in that field. On registration day, however, he discovered that the line for law school was shorter, so he signed up with the legal brethren. In Washington circles Baker's current indecisiveness has inspired allusions to "another Toi Dewey," a GOP presidential aspirant who also dis played a fixation on both sides of every question.

When Panama is finally settled, Howard Baker woul like to come away looking like a man who took the hea and did what was best for his country. By fighting t keep his options open, however, Baker surely ha deepened his political dilemma, both as Republica leader and prospective presidential candidate. He migh have endorsed the treaties early, for example, mad passage a *fait accompli* and gotten himself off the cuttin edge. Most political observers believe that if the treatie are ratified the current furor will subside, except o course in some primaries and GOP delegate caucuses ir 1980. If they fail, on the other hand, they'll be renegotiated, the issue will be prolonged, and nothing will really soften the hardliner's objection that *jurisdiction* is the fundamental issue. Some Baker advisers are convinced that however it works out, Panama will be submerged by larger concerns in 1980—energy, SALT, and others. So it's sometimes suggested that the minority leader can resolve this one in favor of Kissinger and Ford, then take a hard line on President Carter's SALT treaties and make things up with the Reaganites in that way. The conservatives claim they will neither concede his vote on Panama nor forget it. But isn't that what you'd expect them to say in the middle of the fight? Besides, Howard Baker knows he will never be the movement conservatives' candidate for President no matter what he does.

Ideally, the minority leader would like to be decisive in the outcome and also bring a majority of the 38 Republican senators to his point of view. Exactly half that number already have announced against the current treaties and more are listed as leaning to that position, so if any treaties are to be ratified with bipartisan majorities, President Carter will have to agree to modifications, at least those discussed by Baker and Torrijos—priority passage for US warships, unilateral US rights to defend the canal and, perhaps, dropping all references to a future sea level canal. If the President agrees to these provisions, he may just close off Baker's options; Baker then would look foolish and opportunistic voting against the treaties after all the posturing in Panama.

Up to now, the administration has refused to consider any changes, knowing that if it buckled early the Senate might be tempted to decorate the treaties with so many ornaments that they would be unacceptable both here and in Panama. Senator Robert Dole, for example, has eight amendments and two reservations already in the hopper and more up his sleeve. If Carter allows these—shall we call them "Baker modifications"?—to be woven into the legal fabric of the treaties, then the minority leader must take on the responsibility to tame some of the rambunctious Republicans and hold the line right there. That kind of deal might or might not require a second plebiscite in

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'anama, depending upon what Howard Baker believes hat he must yield to opponents of the Panama Canal reaties in order to protect his future as a presidential :andidate.

Howard Baker has strayed far from the water's edge on this one. It will be by far the most important test of his leadership of the minority to date, and he can't prolong the straddle much longer.

Ken Bode

Sadat wants peace and the West Bank is not going to stand in his way.

The Caliph and the Palestinians

by David Pryce-Jones

Many a tale in *The Arabian Nights* reaches its happy ending when a mysterious stranger throws off his disguise and reveals his true identity as the Caliph. He then reconciles enemies, unites lovers, grants wealth and generally resolves humanity's injustices. Benevolent love of his subjects, to the point of moving incognito among them, proves the ruler's worthiness to rule. Since President Sadat appeared in Jerusalem and told the astonished but attentive world that the Israelis were welcome in the Middle East, he has had the aura of just such a Caliph. "In the Name of God," were the opening words of his Knesset address. The trip had the stuff of legend about it, and it would be a dull person indeed who did not have increased hopes for an ending of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

And why now, all of a sudden? Where, to rub Marxist noses in their mystical spells, are the objective factors which have historically determined the events of the last two months? All that President Sadat had to do by way of preparation was spend an unusual amount of time last October and November with General Gamasy, his defense minister, and other senior officers. So long as the army was secure, Sadat could be the Caliph as he pleased. In the event, he had to fire some foreign ministers and bundle out of Egypt a few odd Libyans and Palestinians and Soviet agents, then lean back and listen to the crowds shouting his praises (government-organized, to be sure, but nonetheless whole-hearted for that). Nobody who saw the confused and illiterate conscripts of the Egyptian army returning home in 1967 and 1973, as I did, will be surprised at the promise of relief brought by Sadat's leadership.

Gamal Abdel Nasser created the lie that Egyptians were spoiling to fight Israel. Nasser needed a modern army to force through his nationalizations and expropriations of industry and land, to destroy the old ruling class and police the new (with concentration camps, too). The way to achieve these domestic ambitions, he had seen with a quick and thoroughly contemporary perception, was through the politics of the Cold War. He only had to woo and alarm the two great powers alternately. He didn't really have the clout for this tactic, but after the 1956 Suez campaign he was a skillful enough conjuror to get away with it. What mattered to Nasser was not success or failure against Israel, in the Yemen, or over the union with Syria, but the fact that America and the Soviet Union had been bound into rivalry of aid and arms. Nasser had no conceivable interest in peace. On the contrary, the longer a state of belligerency lasted, especially with Israel, the more inflated his international role. King Farouk had done little but plunder Egypt in time-honored tradition; Nasser dispossessed him to continue the debauch.

By going to Jerusalem, Sadat has put an end to Nasserism in his country. That is a mercy for which to be grateful. Naturally he wants peace only on his own terms, but at least he really wants peace. Sadat has nothing to lose by what he has done. Should Israel give him concessions he can accept, a peace will indeed materialize entirely to his benefit; he will deserve his Nobel Prize and stay in office till the end of his days. If the Israelis cannot satisfy him, he will be able to complain much more loudly and convincingly of their intransigence, and the impossibility of doing business with them. At the very minimum he can then precipitate a crisis in Israel, for utopian expectations have been aroused there which Prime Minister Begin can spurn only at his peril. If the responsibility for ultimate failure of talks in Ismailia or Geneva or wherever lies squarely with Israel, the political and

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moral foundations of Zionism will be shaken. Major emigration is likely to follow if Israelis are led to believe that there is no possible coming to terms with the Arabs now or ever. For 20 years, friends of the Arabs have been urging them to offer Israel something other than the military option, if only to test Zionist faith and morale. With survival at issue, Israel has hitherto been able to avoid the difficult political decisions, and the Arabs have had only themselves to blame for it.

Sadat might not have dared to go so much further than Nasser if he had not been sure of support from the Saudis—the only country whose backing is indispensable to Sadat. A West German reporter on the condition of Egypt apparently concludes that bankruptcy is imminent. This has been true for as long as anyone has been preparing reports; somebody always has shown up in time to pick up. This time it is the Saudis' turn. No sooner was Sadat in Jerusalem than Saudi princes were flocking around capital cities everywhere with the tip-off that they had been "informed but not consulted" about developments. A proper Saudi caution, and a month had passed before anything like an official Saudi statement was heard in support of Sadat.

Lately the power of their petro-dollars has been feeling extremely good to the Saudis. The huge subsidy—with political strings attached, of course—that they have put behind Somalia in its war against Ethiopia has had the effect of buying out the Russians there. And the Saudis have decided that a Palestinian state of some kind on the West Bank is next on the shopping list. This is mainly because Palestinian emigres in Saudi Arabia and throughout the Gulf make the most unwelcome claims. It is all very well to have them as laborers or journeymen clerks, but quite something else when citizenship, pensions and benefits are demanded. Because some Palestinians are considered radical by the standards of Saudi Arabia, all of them had better be pushed off somewhere else, like their own state where they can sink or swim in their independence. That is why the Saudis have been subsidizing the PLO. It does no harm either, in their view, to thwart the West Bank aspirations of Jordan's King Hussein, whose fault is to be a Hashemite.

President Sadat therefore has to do his duty to his Saudi sponsors and support a Palestinian state, in public at least. It looks as if he could have Sinai back any day he cares to sign on the dotted line if it were not for his talk about Palestinian rights—though for them, as such, he gives not a fig. But then nobody knows what has taken place privately between Sadat and Begin. When the two appeared together, first in Jerusalem and then in Ismailia, to announce that they had been discussing the Palestinians and both were grinning and evidently as happy as schoolboys, I must admit to the suspicion that the pair of them had been exchanging stories about what a nuisance the Palestinians are. Subsequent hints on both sides about "disappointment" and "gloom" may be presumed for the time being to be kite-flying.

The Saudis ought to temper their own enthusiasm for a Palestinian state with the reflection that the Soviet Union still wants a Palestinian state because it would be a sure-fire device for perpetuating the whirligig of inter-Arab rivalry. Without such rivalry there would be no Soviet influence in the area, and mere meddling would be more obvious for what it is. Syria sees a Palestinian state the same way. President Hafez Assad cares no more than Sadat for the Palestinians, and indeed gave the Palestine cause its *coup de grace* in the Lebanese civil war, which was responsible for the death of more Palestinians than anything which had ever happened in Israel or Jordan. Syria has enthusiastically donned the mantle of Nasserism. Assad has no conceivable interest in peace. Fighting is his substitute for oil wealth. Without the Palestinian-Israeli deadlock he might have to follow Sadat and sign a peace in return for territory. Then he would have no justification for the military regime upon which he depends for office, no call for arms and aid bid up between the Soviet Union and America. With peace, Syria would sink back into its proper role as a small and obscure Arab nation. That would never do for Assad.

Nobody pretends that American policy in these circumstances has any easy path to take. On the whole it is safer to allow irrational factors to play themselves out, and inactivity in the Middle East is often the lesser of several evils. A timely book, *Decade of Decisions* by William B. Quandt (University of California Press) considers the past 10 years of American Middle East policy and reinforces the view that since nothing in the Middle East is quite what it seems, value judgments and prescriptions are worthless and must be ruled out of court. Quandt is head of the Middle Eastern Affairs division of the National Security Council. He had a hand in writing the Brookings Report, which advocated an autonomous West Bank and Gaza within a Jordanian context. He is full of goodwill, the vaguer the better. Only experts will want to study his text, but everybody can enjoy his insights into the low comedy of bureaucratic decision-making.

The one constant in Middle East policy has been America's commitment to Israel. This is a moral absolute. A second genocidal assault upon Jews will not be contemplated by the victors of the last world war. A great deal of the trouble derives from the Arab refusal to share in this moral vision, arguing in this respect for special exemption from the 20th century. Arabs are not alone in wishing that Hitler and the holocaust had never happened. But the American attitude, it emerges from Quandt's book, is not incompatible with friendship to the Arab states, as is supposed in left-wing circles. By supplying Israel with arms for two successful wars within 10 years, America has not suffered damage to her vital interests, however dire the threats which Nasser used to love to pronounce, and in spite of the oil embargo of 1973. On the contrary,

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America has come to hold a dominating position precisely because her commitment is moral, and there can be no jobbing with it. President Johnson appreciated that a weak Israel called the commitment into question and therefore prejudiced peace, while a strong Israel gave him leverage on the Arabs which was very powerful if he cared to make it so.

The full conclusions were drawn in the Nixon-Kissinger era, when Egypt, and to a lesser extent, Syria, were detached from Soviet dependency. A 15-year mutual defense treaty between the Soviet Union and Egypt, for instance, lasted barely 5 months; it was a perfect Nasserist fig-leaf of expediency. The process was Bismarckian in that the Arabs had to be rewarded by Washington in their moments of weakness, and the Israelis constrained in their moments of glory. Temperamentally Quandt does not much like Kissinger, but he recognizes efficacy when he sees it.

The crisis of the Jordanian civil war in 1970, he believes, was managed most advantageously. American determination to stand behind its friends did indeed deter its opponents. The Syrians were warned off of intervening in Jordan with the necessary strength. Overconfidence subsequently allowed Kissinger to rest on his laurels, and the fallow period after 1970 brought on the 1973 war. The neatness of Quandt's judgment here is suspect. In four years Sadat the hero of the Suez crossing has become Sadat the great peace leader.

Professor Quandt's book ends with tentative suggestions that have been overtaken by events, almost inevitably the sad fate of commentators on Middle East affairs. But Sadat's Jerusalem visit, all the same, shares a logic dating back to the "my friend Henry" days of shuttle diplomacy and step-by-step negotiation. If Kissinger wished to claim the Sadat-Begin meetings as a belated success of his, it would be hard to deny him. Between 1973 and 1976 it became unmistakable that Egypt and Israel stood on the same footing in one crucial respect: each could put political pressure upon the other only through Washington. This was tantamount to bringing them together, as such straws in the wind as "proximity talks" had indicated. Only what Sadat aptly called "the psychological barrier" remained to be broached.

Yet there seems to be little doubt that Sadat's breakthrough took Washington by surprise. Otherwise no sense can be made of the initial tepid response from the White House where joy ought to have reigned unconfined. No sense can be made of contradictory presidential statements urging the participation of Syria in the peace-making process but then declaring that peace-making could very well occur without Syria. Not much sense can be made of Cyrus Vance's will-he-won't-he-join-the-talks. The State Department, the Pentagon, the universities, have plenty of first-rate Arabists at their disposal, and every one of them will tell President Carter and his administration the same thing: that signs of indecision in Washington and vacillating statements and begging pleas to Syria and Jordan will be taken throughout the Middle East as proof positive that American policy, for deep reasons of its own, wants the Sadat-Begin negotiations to fail—which in fact some of these experts want themselves. The best procedure for the US would be to take a leaf out of the Saudi Arabian book and say nothing, if indeed there are reservations about excluding the Soviet Union and its clients from these negotiations—though what these reservations might turn upon is beyond imagining. Sadat has vindicated American policy in the Middle East and the man who does that deserves nothing but the best.

Because of the hesitation and lack of conviction displayed in Washington, at least early on, some people have concluded that the talks must fail. King Hussein is the most prominent of these people, flying off to complain to the King of Saudi Arabia, the Shah of Iran and anyone else who will listen. If he had judged that the talks stood a real chance, he would have wished to participate because in all likelihood the West Bank would return to him in some acceptable shape or form. To join in, though, would prejudice his rather edgy friendship with Syria, and he sees no purpose in that unless he has some sort of prior guarantee of results.

The Palestinians are in their customary disarray. Had the American response been to underpin the Sadat-Begin talks without qualifications, the Palestinians would have assumed that peace was about to be imposed on them by *force majeure*, for they quite well understand that there is no point being a great power like the United States unless it is to make such suitable arrangements through intermediaries like Egypt and Israel. As things are, they do not know what to conclude. A few small demonstrations have occured in Beirut, but Sadat is not to be deterred because two rockets were fired at the Egyptian Embassy there but failed to go off—which is about the level of the organized resistance the Palestinians can now put into the field. People in Gaza and on the West Bank judge that there is no reason to do anything hasty which might have to be regretted. Delegations have travelled to Egypt to express solidarity with Sadat, a few mayors like Elias Freij of Bethlehem have sounded hopeful, but so far the gestures are mostly token.

As for the so-called Rejectionist Front, its insignificance has never been more exposed. Ever since 1967 most observers have been saying that the PLO held the key to the future of the Arab-Israeli dispute. Fine late specimens of this fantasy can still be found, among the Quakers and the always fuzzy-minded international relations types in a few other churches. There is hardly a week when Anthony Lewis in the *New York Times* does not lament that the peacemakers have not included his "necessary," but largely imagined moderate PLO elements in the talks.

Another instance, more extreme, is David Hirst's

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new book, *The Gun and the Olive Branch* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich). To Hirst, the Jews are gangsters and robbers who for no good reason one bright morning decided deliberately to pitchfork the Palestinians out into the wilderness, which would have been impossible without other wicked colonialist and imperialist Jews drum-beating in America, kith and kin actually to the Elders of Zion. Jewish history to him is one long atrocity, masked by the atrocities the Jews themselves have suffered, which they exploit with ferocious malignity to gain sympathy. The Palestinians, on the other hand, have been waiting with exemplary patience to found a secular democratic state of their own (like all the other Arab states, presumably), and what is more, if they do not succeed soon, a third world war will ensue. (For those who are seriously interested in the question of why the Palestinians fled in 1948, I draw attention to the one authoritative documentation there is, *A Political Study of the Arab-Jewish Conflict*, by Rony E. Gabbay, published in 1957. This book ought to be better known, not least by Mr. Hirst.)

Presumably there will always be a few like David Hirst, just as there will be some who read the secrets of the universe in the construction of the Pyramids. Hirst's dislike of Jews and his adulation of the PLO carries him away from history into some psychodrama of his own. It is enough to point out that if he were only 10 percent right, both Israel and Jordan would long since have been ungovernable, the West Bank and Gaza in perpetual riot, and Arafat or the Mufti of Jerusalem before him at the head of a mass movement determine to do or die. It must be fearfully uncomfortable to be Palestinian and find oneself made into a mascot patronized like this and marched into gunfire by ye another Western romancer. But even as Hirst's bool was being published, the facts of life were mocking i for the curiosity it is. For all to see, Egypt has begur negotiating with Israel about the eventual disposal of the West Bank and Gaza. The Palestinian absence from these negotiations might be deplored on all sides, but is instead the subject of indifference. This is the PLO's achievement on behalf of those it claims to be saving.

At the hour of need there proves to be no movement that can articulate Palestinian hopes for security and justice, no way even for such a moral case as can be made for them to have a hearing. It is not with Libya and Iraq that Arafat can build a future. His rhetoric of national liberation finishes in the emptiness of threatening Sadat in person with an assassin's bullet, as though that would remove the impact of what has happened in the political arena where decisions are taken. Self-defeating posturing can go no further. A homeland, an entity, a federation, with or without an Israeli presence—whatever compromise is reached finally on the West Bank and in Gaza will be in spite of the rejectionists. No wonder Begin and Sadat carry on smiling after discussing the Palestine question, for if they should in fact reach substantive agreement about the Middle East map, nobody can stop them from putting it into practice.

At the Belgrade Conference on European Security only Yugoslavia looks really secure.

Tito's Parliament of Europe

by Charles Fenyvesi

Belgrade

The trip from Venice to Belgrade is a passage from a light-hearted Latin land to the brooding Balkan. The border checkpoint comes a few minutes past Trieste, which is already half-Slavic. We stay for more than an hour as Yugoslav security police search for weapons and explosives in the undercarriage and the space under and behind the seats. All around, there are heavy-set men in heavy overcoats and with heavy, Russian-type machine guns. (Italian soldiers carry short-nozzled, light-weight automatics. They lounge around airports as if waiting for dates; their uniform looks as if designed by Yves St. Laurent.) A few people are taken off the train—stubble-cheeked, muddy-booted farmer types who protest vociferously in Italian or Serbo-Croatian. They are charged with economic, not political, offenses.

It is snowing and the train is overheated. Opening the window is the subject of a debate that ends around two a.m. with the victory of a vigorous, six-foot-tall Montenegrin woman who prefers it half open. Another conflict that keeps us awake concerns the right of a

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Gypsy woman from Yugoslavia's Albanian region to sit in our first class compartment of generously padded, crimson plush seats. She offers some *dokument* from a brother—or is it a cousin?—who works for the railway. The other occupants of the compartment complain about her odor, which is indeed inescapable. The Gypsy wins as the conductor fails to exercise his authority. She is just too heavy to be carried out of the compartment.

We arrive in Belgrade at seven in the morning. My luggage is searched for weapons and explosives. I cannot get a hotel room. The US embassy is of no help. The hotels are packed: it's like Mardi Gras in New Orleans. Finally, I find someone I know in the foreign ministry. Within minutes, I have a hotel room, in the coveted Moskva favored by American diplomats, and a press pass to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The conference center is surrounded by gun-toting security men—one every 20 yards. They speak no language other than Serbo-Croatian, and they won't let anyone without a special badge closer than 200 yards from the building. Yugoslavs take pride in what one official calls "absolute security" and they condemn the permissiveness of others, such as Italians and Americans, in dealing with terrorists. "Terrorism is not a problem once the government decides to put an end to it," says one high ranking Yugoslav. He says that Croatian separatists "wouldn't dare to try anything in Yugoslavia."

The Yugoslavs will have no disruption of any kind. Last summer, members of one foreign group planning to demonstrate on behalf of Soviet Jews were promptly arrested and flown out of the country. In the fall, Yugoslav authorities stopped a delegation of Swedish parliamentarians from holding a press conference on Soviet violations of human rights.

The Belgrade conference is a true Parliament of Europe, Yugoslav officials say with pride, and they are delighted to sponsor it. They built for it a conference center that cost more than $40 million. Later this year it will house meetings of the World Bank and the nonaligned nations. Yugoslavs would like to line up more customers, such as the OPEC, but competition is stiff from nearby (and more glamorous) Vienna and Rome. The center's architecture may be called Yugoslav International: an eclectic blend of Scandinavian sleek, pop-arty functionalism (exposed trusses and ducts, painted in bold colors) and a vaguely French modernism (the boxy, uninviting furniture is of stainless steel, brightly colored plastic and mahogany-stained pine).

The conference itself combines aspects of the 1815 Congress of Vienna with contemporary group therapy. But these delegates are not in a dancing mood. If anyone is doing serious drinking of champagne or slivowitz, it is not for detente. No one is being won over, it is said ruefully on both sides of the ideological divide, and the hearts and minds of the people are far, far away. This is a gathering of bureaucrats—the mercenaries of the fine print, the jet set from Milovan Djilas's new class.

The great achievement of the conference, its Yugoslav hosts proclaim at every opportunity, is that 33 European governments, plus the United States and Canada, talk to one another frankly and openly, with no subject a taboo and the Principality of Lichtenstein on ostensibly equal footing with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

No records are kept—so delegates can *ventilate* their feelings, says a Yugoslav official, a former *partizan*. Having to bargain with opponents while knowing that the bargaining will resume at the next conference, probably in Madrid, provides a uniquely effective *sensitivity training*, he argues. Compromise clauses, even abandoned proposals, exert a *psychological influence* during the conference and between conferences. For instance, the Romanian proposal that no European state shall have foreign forces on its soil—phrased in general terms but intended to call attention to the continuing Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia—acts as an often *subconscious brake, an inhibition*. The conference *sensitizes* officials to acquire a different *state of mind* in which demands are not pressed beyond a certain point. Instead, there is *goal-oriented activity* to reach agreement on statements acceptable to all participants, the reconstructed old *partizan* concludes.

Critics, from East Germans to Americans, complain of the boredom of interminable meetings in a dull Balkan town. Progress is measured in adjectives modified; hopes are fastened on subordinate clauses; another cold war seems to hinge on a semi-colon.

The 400-or-so delegates are engaged in a search for consensus. Unlike the UN General Assembly, the Security Council or other international bodies, this conference is supposed to agree on a statement that all participants will sign; a single objection is tantamount to a veto.

The "Final Act" of the first European security-and-cooperation conference, two years ago in Helsinki, moved Leonid Brezhnev to tears, presumably because it legitimized Soviet conquests after World War II. But the statement also incorporated references to human rights. Belgrade will issue a "Concluding Document"—the term "Final Act" was recognized as too ominous sounding—sometime this month, or by March at the latest.

US delegates say they are determined to include a strong statement on human rights and recognition of the non-governmental (that is to say, dissenting) monitoring groups that sprung up in East European countries after the Helsinki agreement. Many observers feel that the West Europeans, particularly the Dutch and the French, have been more emphatic in their support for human rights in Belgrade than the

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Americans. The Russians are pushing for a stronger commitment to economic and cultural cooperation. As a counter-offensive to the theme of human rights, Bulgaria and Hungary are promoting such proposals as the right to a job and women's equality.

Among the nearly 100 proposals submitted, the ones certain to be approved are those calling for facilitation of business contacts, removal of barriers to binational marriages and detailed information on troop maneuvers, possibly including naval movements. Some proposals are only bargaining chips, such as Russia's appeal that existing military alliances not add new members (a move designed to prevent Spain from joining NATO) and the call by nine West European states that all states issue five-year passports to anyone who applies.

Belgrade is an appropriate place for a conference on security and cooperation. The theme itself is a testimonial to Titoism—the one thriving post-war "ism" in the wreckage of political ideologies discarded by East and West, North and South. Titoism is Leninism deStalinized; Gaullism without anti-American truculence and gallic chauvinism; neutralism with an army as self-confident as Israel's; fervent South Slav nationalism masked by an internationalism that is self-righteous and self-promoting.

During and after World War II, Josip Tito was revered as an anti-Nazi hero whose hideouts had included one across the street from the German headquarters in Belgrade and whose few guerrillas distracted as many as 600,000 Nazi soldiers from the war effort. After Tito's break with Stalin in 1948, aspiring communist nationalists in East Europe looked to Tito for inspiration. Following Nikita Khrushchev's 1955 pilgrimage to Belgrade—the only time the Kremlin ever said "sorry"—Tito again became a model, this time for those in East and West looking for a third road, for an alternative way of dealing with the Russians. Tito's power of persuasion even managed to get Yugoslavia accepted in the Afro-Asian club. He became a friend and advisor to Nasser and Nehru, Sukarno and Nkrumah. Nasserism, Nehruism, Sukarnoism and Nkrumahism are gone, unlamented and unremembered. But Titoism lives, and Yugoslav leaders look forward to having Italy turn Titoist once the Communists join the government.

Stalin was right in elevating Titoism to the rank of the major communist heresy. That arch-paranoid had a real enemy in Tito—a rival more dangerous than Trotsky ever had been, because a country stood behind him ready to fight another guerrilla war. According to Bela Kiraly, chairman of the Hungarian revolutionary military council in 1956 and now a history professor at Brooklyn College, the general staff of East European armies had prepared a detailed plan for the invasion of Yugoslavia. Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Albania were to provide the frontline troops; the Red Army was to have the glory of liberating Belgrade. The soldier were indoctrinated: they were to rid Yugoslavia' honest working people of Titoist treason. They were t be ready for combat by the summer of 1950; Genera Kiraly was the designated commander of th Hungarian contingent. But, Kiraly says, US resistanc in Korea suggested to Stalin the probability of a simila reaction in the Balkan, and the invasion plan wa scuttled.

Most Yugoslavs believe, as they are taught to believe, that Stalin did not attack because he feared Yugoslavia's tough army. But in his book *Conversations with Stalin*, Djilas tells how drained of strength and equipment the Yugoslav army was after World War II. Stalin knew this well because he demanded and received complete reports from the Yugoslav high command, which turned to him for assistance.

Today there are photographs of Tito in shop windows and on office walls, even in private homes: a full-length portrait of a youthful *partizanski* leader with a greatcoat casually thrown around his powerful shoulders, or the bust of a gracefully aging marshal of the army, with rows of medals across his barrel chest. His well-cut uniform is the same color as his eyes: a shade between powder blue and battleship grey.

Yugoslavia is an artificial federation with a bloody history of ethnic strife. Yet under Tito it has become the one European state with a genuinely egalitarian nationality policy. World War I started here, and Yugoslavs have the distinction of having successfully defied both Hitler and Stalin. Yet the most frequent national slogans extol stability and peace. Yugoslavia is the only European country which has not changed its leader for the past 34 years.

Tito came to power at the age of 51, so he is unlikely to beat Emperor Franz Josef's record—68 years—as the longest reigning European ruler. Tito is the last Habsburg—not as a descendent (every larger central European city has its quota of families claiming descent from one enterprising archduke or another) but as an apostolic successor excelling in the traditional Habsburg exercise of keeping the balance between rival power centers and having his country serve as the one stable entity everyone else must accommodate—in fact, the very standard for normalcy.

Franz Josef's credo was that the citizen's first duty is to keep calm. He believed that his monarchy was the indispensable ingredient of European peace. Tito evolved the doctrine that defending Yugoslavia's independence contributes to the consolidation of world peace and that international stability helps guarantee Yugoslavia's independence. Tito holds, as Franz Josef held, the beliefs that repression, however regrettable, is justified whenever domestic tranquility is at stake; that any suggestion of separatism spells a mortal danger; and that certain books and individuals must be quarantined if they threaten "to confuse the public." And to confuse the public has never been difficult, for

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Journalists and World Peace

An exclusive interview with Gustav Smid

Belgrade

Gustav Smid of the Press Department of the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry is looking for American journalists who would describe conditions in Czechoslovakia objectively. But he is afraid that even in the unlikely event of his finding such a journalist, no important American newspaper would publish the story. Smid contends that American journalists deliberately present a distorted view of Czechoslovakia, paying attention to dissidents who are "a trifle, a nothing," and ignoring the important achievements of the government in fields such as health, public education and mechanization of agriculture. Such non-objective or subjective journalism is inconsistent with the spirit of the Helsinki agreement, Smid believes. It also misleads the Western public, including honest working people who do not have the money or the intellectual interest to fly to Czechoslovakia to find out about the true, objective facts of life there.

Czechoslovakia has a solution to this problem. Smid told me about it in an interview conducted in the bar attached to the press room of the Belgrade Conference on Security and Cooperation. The delegation of the People's Republic of Czechoslovakia is recommending to the Conference a resolution that governments should be held responsible for the writings of journalists.

Smid finds that Western delegations are insincere in opposing the Czeck proposal on the grounds of freedom of the press. There is no free press in the West because if the government really wants to stop publication of some article, it can. This is because in fact the government is in the hands of the large capitalist companies which can stop running the advertisements which pay for the newspapers.

Smid says that journalists would observe the rule of objectivity his delegation suggests if the government insisted on it. Or, at the very least, responsible journalists would not disregard it. He concedes that a Western journalist may well have subjective reactions on this or that issue and that it would be unreasonable to expect a Western journalist to write in the style of *Rude Pravo*, the Prague communist newspaper. But must the Western journalist's copy always reflect those subjective reactions, particularly after the government advised him to be objective? Journalists have a most serious responsibility as scientific observers. Western journalists habitually abuse that responsibility, Smid declares. They write articles on subjects that are fashionable—dissenters are now *à la mode*—or titillating—sex and violence are good examples but there are also many cases of appealing to racist instincts.

Smid acknowledges that Western governments cannot very well jail journalists who flaunt the rule Czechoslovakia is proposing. But governments and the entire international community working to reach detente suffer from subjective journalism, and it would help the cause of detente if journalists repeatedly violating the rule of objectivity would be subject to disciplinary action. That is what happened in Czechoslovakia after the counterrevolution of Alexander Dubcek was defeated. Journalists who insisted in their mistaken views and failed to acknowledge that they had erred in following Dubcek have lost their jobs. They were not executed, and only a handful were imprisoned—those who tried to plot against the government.

Smid cannot ignore the consensus that the chances are slim for the Belgrade conference adopting his government's proposal. But he declines to speculate on the subject, not even after several glasses of viniak, the powerful Yugoslav cherry brandy.

C. F.

the standard applied is that of potential mischief (read "change") as perceived by the ruler or his ever-watchful loyalists.

During his long reign, Franz Josef was admired. His subjects copied his mutton chop beard, his dignified gait, his terse way of speaking. People born the same year as Franz Josef cited that fact as if it had been an act of loyalty. Tens of thousands of children were named after him, and their ranks may well include Josip Tito, who was born during the Monarchy and fought in its army in World War I.

Yet the structure of stability constructed so painstakingly by the Old Emperor collapsed, as did the entire *ancien regime* he symbolized. Within two years after his death there were revolutions everywhere, and no more Austro-Hungarian monarchy, no imperial Russia or Germany.

One can only hope—positively and piously—that Yugoslavia will prove that history will forego repetition of this particular irony, and that a small country which has shown so much courage and cunning these past three decades will remain a fortress of security and cooperation. And one hopes that post-Tito Yugoslavia may evolve a more open system, one that allows its critics to express their views freely, rather than rest content with the self-righteousness and self-limitation imposed by an old Habsburg who was once a *partizan*.

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Arts and Lives

Stanley Kauffmann on films

People Struggling

Padre Padrone (Cinema 5). This is a good picture that is racked by its ambition to be a great one. The subject comes from a best-selling Italian autobiography—Sardinian, to be precise—by Gavino Ledda, who was an illiterate shepherd until he was 20. His poor and domineering father had taken him out of school when he was small, but army service educated him. After his discharge, Ledda underwent a brief slippage back to filial serfdom, then went on to the university and to authorship.

Two brothers made the film, Paolo and Vittorio Taviani, both in their late 40s. They began making short documentaries in 1954 and since 1960 have made six features, but, so far as I know, this is their first American release. *Padre Padrone,* which means *Father Master,* was commissioned by RAI, the Italian state television, and broadcast in two parts. It proves again how far superior European TV is to ours, and highlights again the Medicean role that Italian and French and German TV have been playing for theatrical film.

Like so many works by post-1960 Europeans *Padre Padrone* is self-contradictory. It tries to combine a naturalistic intent, presumptively Marxist in origin, with a postmodernist esthetic. This paradox is significantly Italian these days, as in the films of Marco Bellocchio (a far superior director to the Fratelli Taviani on the evidence so far). It's much less prevalent in the New German cinema which is postmodernist in the extreme but where the political radicalism, if any, is usually contained in easy anti-bourgeois attitudes.

The Italian paradox hurts *Padre Padrone,* which is a pity because the material—fundamentally the always-appealing *Wild Child* theme—is strong and because much of the film is rightly harsh. But, repeatedly, after we have been immersed in the bleak world of the Sardinian shepherd, the intrusive hands of the artists reach in to display their sympathy and virtuosity.

The film opens with the actor Saverio Marconi, as the adult Gavino, standing in the corridor of the town school cutting branches off a stick. Then he goes up the stairs and hands the stick to Omero Antonutti, the actor who plays his father, saying "You always carried a stick." Then the story proper begins as the father bursts into a classroom to take the boy Gavino out of school for good—to work. Near the end of the film the real Gavino Ledda stands in the same spot in the school corridor and talks about the scene with his father and his young self, which we then see repeated at the top of the stairs. Why this arty hocus-pocus? In a film designed to recreate a society veristically, why this latter-day filmic self-consciousness, except to prove that the Fratelli Taviani are esthetically hip?

Why are the traveling shots of the father striding through the fields seen from above, as from a low-flying helicopter? Why the sententiously astringent editing between sequences? Why, in a shot of a lonely mountain pasture, the sudden introduction of a waltz from *Die Fledermaus* long before two itinerant musicians come into view? (And could they really have been playing that waltz? So well?) In a sequence of Dionysian outbreak, when sexual fever hits the whole community, how—in Gavino's autobiography—could we see his father and mother in bed? And, as is always the case with artiness, the picture simply doesn't know when to finish.

On the other hand, it creates fully the characters of the father and the son, the tension of love/hate between them, the justice on both sides. The hard father is not a beast: he's the product of the only injunction he knows: Survive. And everything about his life makes the injunction difficult to obey. He needs his son's help, his son's life, for that survival; besides, his control of his son is one of his few means of ego gratification. The relation between the two is forcefully made, with much crude deta of their lives, so that after the son ha apparently been emancipated by hi army training, we believe at once that h sinks back into subservience when h returns and has to fight hard to pul himself out.

The point of comparison for *Padr Padrone* is *Bandits of Orgosolo*—I wish could say "obvious point" but Vittorio De Seta's beautiful film is shamefully unknown in the US. (*TNR,* May 16, '64) *Bandits* is about two Sardinian brothers, a man and a boy, shepherds who are forced into outlawry by the circumstances of their hard life, not about a personal relationship produced by those circumstances, as is *Padre Padrone:* still the pictures are comparable. I saw *Bandits* again last year, twice, and was again struck by the rock-hard simplicity that makes it real art, not prettiness. Many, many shots are lovely, but *we* see the loveliness, De Seta doesn't insist on it. He is telling us that these shepherds don't see it, either: the beauties of nature are for tourists.

With less of what can be called cinematic theatricality, *Padre Padrone* would have done better by its subject. Yet that subject—in essence the agony of change—grinds through.

Every member of the cast is good. The color print being shown in New York is poor.

Films Worth Seeing

Close Encounters of the Third Kind. Stunning. Technology—of film, not of astrophysics—feeding some of the hungers of our time with manna from the heavens, not from Heaven.

The Goodbye Girl. Magazine romance à la mode. Plenty of Neil Simon's crackling cracks for personable Marsha Mason and Richard Dreyfuss; Herbert Ross directs with bustle.

Julia. Too lush and plush for its Spartan anti-Nazi story, but Vanessa Redgrave, Jason Robards and Jane Fonda (in that order) vanquish the upholstery.

The Turning Point. It has some film stars and a plot, but don't let them bother you. It has Mikhail Baryshnikov, his dancing and even some of his acting, along with glimpses of other ballet wonders.

SK

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The Battle of Chile (Tricontinental). This is a documentary, three hours and 10 minutes, shot during the last 10 months of the Allende regime in 1973. It was made by the Chilean director Patricio Guzmán, an Allende partisan, and a team of five—two of whom are now reported to be in a concentration camp. Guzmán is in Havana where he is editing a sequel to this film.

It's in two parts, "The Insurrection of the Bourgeoisie" and "The Coup d'Etat." Part One chronicles the bitter black comedy of the middle-class support of insurrectionists—truck drivers, student rioters, and others—in the hope of toppling Allende's Marxist government. Part Two reports, in graphic detail, the military overthrow of that government.

There is little critical to be said about this picture. It is "merely" gripping fact, well presented. I could note that Part One might be trimmed a little—some of the talk at a union meeting, for instance; and some references to CIA influence in the narration are unsupported in the film itself, though they get plenty of support from subsequent revelations. But then I should note that, in one sequence, a cameraman photographs an officer shooting him—the cameraman—fatally.

Guzmán has said in an interview (*Socialist Revolution*, Sep.-Oct., '77) that when he and his friends started filming 10 months before the overthrow, they thought that some sort of crisis was coming: either a fascist coup d'etat or a civil war that the Allende forces would win or would lose. So we watch footage that was shot under the approach of one of three harsh eventualities, to help explain one or another forthcoming fate.

Energy lights the film, energy of a special kind. The working-class speakers in the film, interviewed or addressing groups, are highly politicized and highly articulate. Of course Guzmán chose the pieces to be used, but in the extemporaneous material particularly, there is no sense of parroting, only of energetic conviction. These seem to be genuinely political working people—a kind of Marxist dream. And as we watch, we ask ourselves: Where are they now?

A grim, intimate, unique record.

Note on Critical Method. In an adverse review of *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (*New York Review*, Jan. 26, '78), Martin Gardner says that the film has "a thin, hackneyed plot" and continues:

> *This is easier to comprehend if you read Spielberg's written version . . . just issued by Dell paperbacks . . . Here on the stark pages, uncontaminated by clanking sounds and flashing colors, you can savor the film's dull story, cardboard characters, and dreary dialogue in all their pure, clean, adolescent banality.*

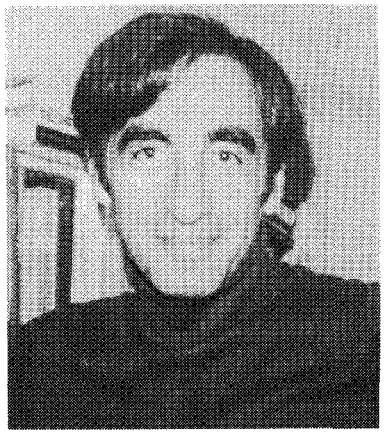
Yes, and if you read the librettos of *La Sonnambula* and *Der Freischütz* and *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *Madama Butterfly*, there on the stark pages uncontaminated by sounds and colors, you can savor *their* dull stories, cardboard characters, and dreary dialogue in all their pure, clean, adolescent banality.

James Lardner on television

The Sadat/MacNeil-Lehrer/Sophia Loren Report

Not since Tiny Tim has anyone burst onto our television screens so dramatically as did Anwar Sadat this last November. The rapprochement with Israel got the headlines, but Sadat's equally sudden embrace of American television may have been nearly as meaningful. Some TV critics—print journalists, the lot of them—made note of this phenomenon, but mostly to worry that all the electronic attention might somehow screw up the prospects for peace. There was Sadat, night after night, on the hotline to the two Walters—Barbara and Cronkite—unveiling his soul, answering their questions with astonishing candor, or an excellent imitation thereof.

"Never was a historic event so completely dominated by a news medium," wrote Charles Seib in the *Washington Post*. "Can age-old, infinitely complex disputes between peoples be dealt with before the television cameras? Can they even be dealt with in private negotiations that are periodically in-



Michael Walzer demolishes the assumption that all's fair in war.

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terrupted so the principals can go before the cameras? . . . Were expectations raised unduly to satisfy television's vast appetite, and were antagonisms exacerbated by the sustained high pitch?"

It is true that TV correspondents—and journalists of all stripes—have a way of unearthing differences between parties that might otherwise escape the notice of the parties themselves. And the artful use of ambiguity can likewise be frustrated by the right sort of nosy questions, as demonstrated early on in the recent maneuvers when President Sadat tried to fudge slightly on the question of Palestinian representation at a peace conference, and his inquisitors, having none of it, tried equally hard to force him into a position more squarely for or against the PLO. Sadat was irritated, and showed it—two unusual occurrences.

There was another unsettling side to the Anwar Sadat Show. At times we seemed to be watching a man at the end of his psychological rope. He invited his oldest and best friends to a party, and none of them came—by itself, a perfectly good excuse for a nervous breakdown. There was talk of a coup or an assassination, which can't have been any help. And he certainly didn't seem to be getting the recommended eight hours of sleep per night. Could any of us be faulted for wondering with each succeeding TV appearance if inner and outer forces might at last combine to bring about the man's complete collapse?

But he survived. At press time, he was surviving very nicely. And it began to seem not so farfetched that perhaps it had all along been the Egyptian President rather than those heavy rollers from ABC, CBS and NBC who had been calling the shots.

The customary explanation for the United States' sustained and fervent support of Israel has been the influence of American Jews. But American gentiles, too, and across a wide ideological spectrum, have tended to identify with Israel's fight for survival. One reason may be that the Arabs have done a truly miserable job of public relations over the years. During the phase of the Mideast struggle that molded current opinion on the subject, we were treated to frequent TV appearances by Golda Meir, who proved again and again that all those years in the Milwaukee schools had not gone to waste; she knew a thing or two about American audiences, and, like Winston Churchill, handled us rather more deftly than she sometimes handled her own people. The personification of the Arab cause, on the other hand, was Yassir Arafat, who seemed to regard it as his life's mission to keep the image of the Arab in America absolutely as low as possible.

Whether or not it was Sadat's purpose to correct this image discrepancy by offering himself as a new symbol for the Arab world, that is essentially what he has done through a series of casual, pipe-smoking, occasionally faltering but very smartly engineered interviews on American television. It is a feat that probably could not have been accomplished even a few years ago, before instant satellite hookups became the routine TV news tool they are today.

Signorina Loren e Signor Caffè

One of Sadat's most remarkable interviews was with columnist/cartoonist Ranan Lurie. It included not only Sadat's description of Lybia's Qaddafi as a "mental case," but also his offhand declaration that he had started the 1973 war simply to give the Egyptian people a shot in the arm. And Sadat was talking to a former Israeli paratroop officer who had fought in that war—plus two others—on the Israeli side.

The Lurie interview was filmed for NBC, but the tape was lost in transit by Trans World Airlines, and wound up being aired instead on NET's MacNeil-Lehrer Report.

Much of television's best reporting has been winding up lately on the MacNeil-Lehrer Report, which takes a single news story by storm for one live half-hour each weekday night. Issues tackled during 1977 included: the Panama Canal treaties; Amtrak; the unionization of the J.P. Stevens Co.; natural gas; the rise of soccer in the United States; and "The Great American Turkey" (a Thanksgiving production). In the last-named of these shows, we learned that the American turkey has been so altered nutritionally and genetically in recent years that its legs are no longer quite up to the task of supporting the bird.

But we were reassured that further modifications could soon be expected, including more widely spaced legs, that would set this matter right.

That's the kind of invaluable information the MacNeil-Lehrer Report is constantly providing. A joint production of WETA-26 in Washington and WNET-13 in New York, the show typically assembles guests representing the several constituencies with a direct interest in any given issue, throws in a representative of our elected government, and lets them have at each other while moderators Robert MacNeil and Jim Lehrer struggle to impose some order on the proceedings. The guest selection is of high order, and the shows are often supplemented with exotic pieces of news film, like the Lurie-Sadat interview, not likely to be encountered elsewhere. All in all, the perfect antidote, or substitute, for the network evening news.

1977 expired on a low note so far as commercial television was concerned. December was dominated by an interminable series of Christmas specials, including the *Bob Hope Christmas Special, John Denver's Rocky Mountain Christmas, Father Knows Best: Home for Christmas, Mac Davis: I Believe in Christmas,* and *Dean Martin's Christmas in California*. But 1978 was looking better. At 9 pm on the evening of January 1st (EST), a viewer was obliged to choose among *60 Minutes* on CBS (with a classic exposé of a California health spa that offered Mike Wallace at the peak of his form), a rousing remake of *The Four Feathers* on NBC, the movie *Serpico* on ABC, and a superior episode of *I, Claudius* on PBS.

What the rest of the new year will bring is not entirely a mystery. It will bring two new names and faces to the world of commercial endorsements. One is Billy Carter, assuring us in countless different ways that his new beer is no mere flash in the mug. The other is Sophia Loren, who will likewise be endorsing a new product, the Filter Fresh water purification system, as well as an old one, Mr. Coffee, from the same manufacturer.

Miss Loren will earn approximately a million dollars for these commercials, according to the *National Enquirer*, which reports that she plans to donate the proceeds to charity. Explains "celebrity

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broker" Lloyd Kolmer: "Her instant recognizability as a superstar, the glamour element that surrounds her, her earthy quality, the fact that she's appeared with the best leading men in the industry, and her motherhood make her one of the top commercial properties in the world."

Wolf Von Eckardt on architecture

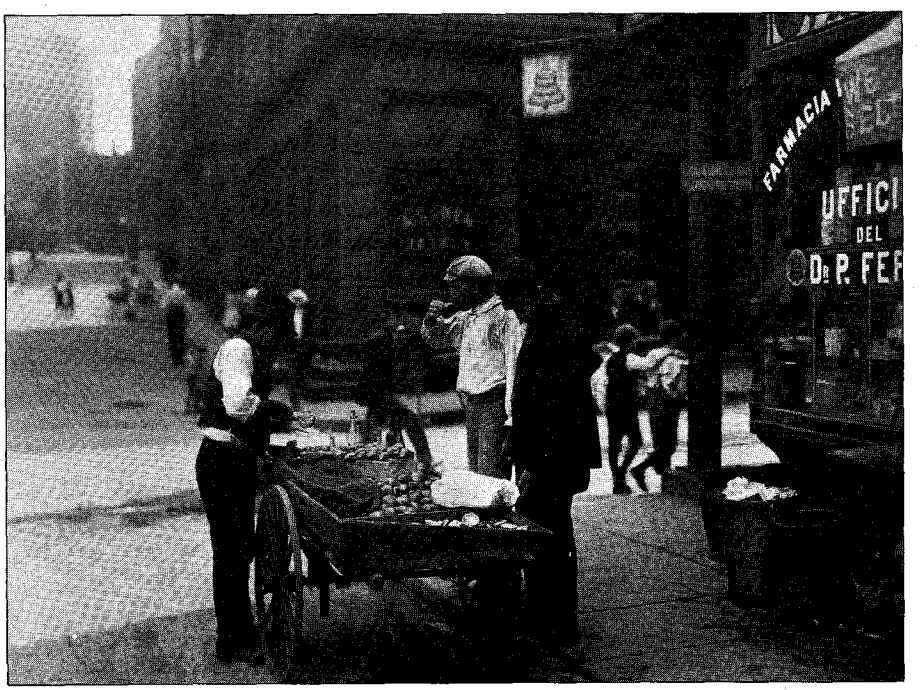
Double Manhattan

New York, New York—Almost 10 years ago, before this city knew it was broke, its Planning Commission urged a vast increase in the number and height of office skyscrapers on Manhattan south of Central Park. With only one dissent, voiced by Beverly Moss Spatt, the Commission argued that to keep up with what we then so proudly hailed as "the affluent society," the number of office jobs concentrated on the lower half of the tiny island would have to be doubled by the year 2000. The resulting access problems and traffic jams were to be taken care of by additional bridges, subways, super-highways, multi-level underground concourses, walkways above the street, and acrophobic links between skyscrapers.

The proposal was contained in a monumental (16½ inches square, ca. 16 lbs.) universally ignored masterplan. Its illustrations resembled the utopian sketches for a *Città Nuova*, freed from the bonds of traditions and conventions, which the Italian Futurist Antonio Sant'Elia exhibited in 1914. Like Sant'Elia's, the Planning Commission's sketches showed no humans held in bondage by such conventions as street trees, small stores, or nice old, ornamented buildings, to say nothing of the simple amenity of a little unplanned messiness.

Today, the New York City Planning Commission is concerned with encouraging more sidewalk cafes.

The Commission's Urban Design Group also devotes its talented efforts to saving old streets and neighborhoods without displacing their residents, mummifying them à la Colonial Williamsburg, or throwing federal money at them. What is more, the efforts are successful. Financial crisis or no, Manhattan's "Little Italy," a frisky, mostly lower middle class neighborhood of small shops and walk-up apartments between Greenwich Village and China town, had an astonishing *risorgimento* in the last few years.



Manhattan's "Little Italy" c. 1900. Courtesy of The Bettmann Archive.

In fact, due largely, I think, to the good offices of its Urban Design Group, the mood in the dingy New York City planning offices at 2 Lafayette Street has radically changed since the Commission ordered that double Manhattan. The Urban Design Group is a kind of task force of a dozen architects, established in 1972 by Mayor Lindsay on the recommendation of Philip Johnson. It is currently headed by an effervescent, Israeli-born architect, Raquel Ramati, who talks about the sidewalks of New York as a Jewish mother talks about her children.

The change in the Commission, or more precisely in New York City's official planning philosophy, is from playing God to seeking God in details. Rather than attempting to recreate the city in their image (by means of a 16 pound masterplan which all those devils ignore), the planners now decentralize their activities and tend to the seemingly small things down in the neighborhoods that make city life a little better. They treat the city like a garden, weeding and pruning, replanting and reseeding to keep it reasonably healthy and pleasant.

The new spirit of Jane Jacobism in New York is not just a matter of fashionable old house restoration and urban chic—of SoHo's remodelled cast iron lofts. For old neighborhoods and new skyscrapers alike, it means finding the ingredients of healthy and pleasant city life and strengthening or creating them. It is done with zoning and building regulations and the bonuses a city can give a builder: We give you five rentable stories of office space more than the zoning calls for, if you give us a nice plaza in front of the building. In the same manner the authorities can prevent developments that may be detrimental to public amenity.

In the matter of sidewalk cafés, Ramati and her group have carefully analyzed where they are desirable (plazas with little pedestrian traffic and much need for attractions) and where they are undesirable (heavily travelled shopping areas that are already too congested). She and her group have analyzed New York City's 200 cafés to see what makes them attractive (open or glass enclosed ones which do not appear as a structure) and what makes them undesirable (heavy enclosures). The Ramati group then prepared a map of Manhattan showing where the cafés are more needed, where they can be

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olerated and where they should not be llowed. It also prepared precise egulations for their design.

It used to take 10 to 18 months to get a ermit for a sidewalk cafe. With the new uidelines, cafes which promise life, harm and color at the right location will e encouraged by quick approvals. There are detailed regulations, easily nforced, to make sure each cafe serves he interests of its neighborhood as well is of its owner.

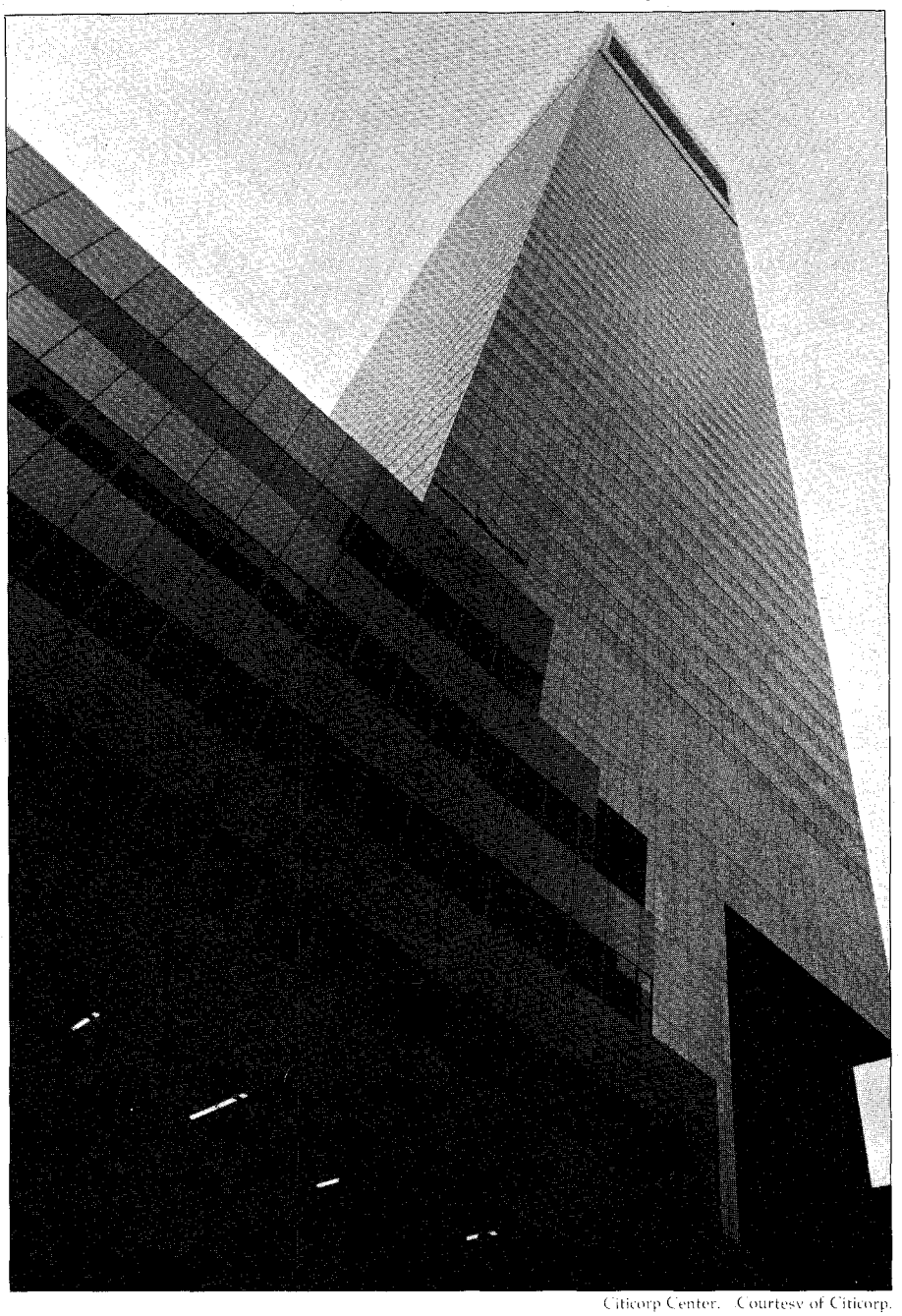
In Little Italy, the Planning Commission worked with the local citizen group, the Little Italy Restoration Association, or LIRA, to define its charm, ambience and flavor and draw up special legislation to preserve them without restricting welcome modernization, growth and change. Some of this legislation is unconventional.

Little Italy's old tenements, for instance, are set flush with the lot line, using every inch of space. In the past to make modern apartment houses more "decent, safe and sanitary," as the 1949 law puts it, regulations required open space around the buildings, giving them more air and sunshine. In compensation, the builder was allowed to go higher, so he ended up with the same amount of rental square feet. The idea was noble, but the result is dismal. The open space is usually covered with litter and mangy lawn and the tower bears no relation to its walk-up neighbors. In fact, it clobbers them. The character of the neighborhood is in ruin.

The new special district zoning keeps new buildings in harmony with the old, not only in height, but also in use of building materials. On certain streets shops are required on the street level, as in the old days. New storefronts must conform to the design of their older neighbors. They must also limit the size of their signs. Developers of large properties on Houston Street are allowed more useable space than regulations provide if they contribute to the improvement and building of public parks which are sorely needed in the area.

You would think that developers curse all these special regulations as bureaucratic chicanery and take their construction cranes where they have red, white and blue liberty to make true progress. Not so.

The new design controls assure interested builders and investors that Little Italy will remain Little Italy, *pasta, prosciutto,* religious festivals, bunting and *mamma mia.* A secure image is worth a lot of money. There are 15 new restaurants in the district since the Planning Commission's *risorgimento* started two years ago.



Citicorp Center. Courtesy of Citicorp.

Another set of requirements and bonuses seeks to improve the life and looks of the spaces in between buildings—the street, sidewalks, setbacks and plazas—in new developments all over New York.

Yes, there is new development. Mayor Koch may worry about the city's debts. New York City's legitimate theaters sold eight million tickets last year, a million more than 1976. Bloomingdale's, Macy's and Bonwit-Teller had record sales and planned extensive renovation of their Manhattan stores. Several new midtown skyscrapers are either nearing completion or under design. Among them are office towers for IBM, AT&T, and Olin and an apartment tower at 59th Street and Park Avenue designed by I.M.Pei.

The most interesting of the just completed skyscrapers is the Citicorp Center at 53rd Street and Lexington Avenue. It stands out because of its glaring aluminum "skin" and its slanted roof. The roof should be a relief from the flat, sawed-off tops of typical modern skyscrapers. They just stop—blah—without period, exclamation point, or flourish. Citicorp slides to an end, which is more interesting, but in an ugly sort of way.

The slant was originally designed to accommodate luxury apartments with receding terraces. A bit of Florida beach hotel in the Manhattan sky. When the zoning complications prevented this, the architect, Hugh Stubbins, changed the orientation of the slant to turn the roof into a solar energy collector. The

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National Science Foundation helped develop a system. The system, however, would save only $3000 a year on a $1.5 million investment in piping and voltaic panels and such. So now the Citicorp roof just slants for no particular purpose—although the latest word is that General Electric may still come up with something solar energy-wise.

The $128 million, 78-story building has other innovations, however. It has a huge stabilizer on the 50th floor—200 tons of concrete floating in oil—that reduces the sway of the tower in strong winds. It rests on a seven-story high structure, a huge column, as it were. Around this column is a lofty atrium court with galleries containing shops and restaurants. Also nestled into this atrium is the tiny (28 seats) St. Peter's Lutheran Church.

I find the church, or chapel, rather, truly moving—one of the few modern religious spaces that conveys the combination of comfort and awe a place of worship should convey. The interiors were designed by sculptor Louise Nevelson, who furnished a small altar room with her wood sculptures but left the main sanctuary bare and light—white walls and bleached ash furniture.

The Citicorp atrium and sunken garden court with direct access to the subway, special pavement, light fixtures, and trees, also lifts the spirit.

It is the first public space in New York City to be designed under the Urban Design Group's guidelines.

Books Considered

On Photography
by Susan Sontag

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux, $7.95)

Those who think of Susan Sontag as America's number one discerner and defender of "the new" may well be surprised to hear her voicing so many doubts—of both a moral and an esthetic nature—about photography (which may not be the "newest" of the serious arts in this country, but is certainly one of the last to receive widespread popular and official recognition). It may even appear to some that Sontag is repudiating (or at least qualifying) many of the more audacious positions she has taken in the past regarding the autonomy of the esthetic or the value of what she herself has called "the new sensibility."

But *On Photography*, her first collection of essays since *Styles of Radical Will* eight years ago, is, in almost every important way, consistent with her earlier and best-known work. In fact, it's my guess that Sontag has chosen to write about photography not because it's on so many people's minds right now, but because no other subject invariably raises so many issues of continuing interest *to her*. And because I believe that *On Photography* is ultimately more interesting and truthful for what it tells us about Sontag than for what it tells us about photography, I'd like to begin by discussing those intellectual motifs (obsessions, really) which link *On Photography* so strongly to her earlier work:

(a) *The predatory nature of consciousness:*

If any single concern can be said to unify Sontag's work as novelist, esthetician, critic, filmmaker, and writer of short stories, it is surely the "cannibalistic" nature of secular, Western consciousness to the world outside it. Hence for Sontag, "The camera is really the ideal arm of consciousness in its acquisitive mood." Furthermore, ". . . the most grandiose result of the photographic enterprise is to give us the sense that we can hold the whole world in our heads—as an anthology of images." Sontag has always tried to obey the phenomenologist's injunction to "let things reveal themselves." But photography, she argues, does not record the world passively. Consequently, "There is an aggression implicit in every use of the camera."

(b) *The way in which the hyperactive, image-clogged nature of urban life dulls our perceptual faculties:*

Photography, or more specifically, the principle of photographic reproduction, is the largest single contributor to this image-glut. Not only do we often encounter the photographed images c things before we experience the thing themselves, but more and more w interpret something as "real" to th extent that it resembles its ow photograph. Sontag's obsession witl "silence" (which begins as early as he first novel, *The Benefactor*, in which sh discusses "styles of silence") has alway been profoundly ecological: a desire no to contribute to this image-overload. *O Photography* concludes with a plea for "ar ecology not only of real things, but o images as well." Many people (photographers especially) will no doubt be disappointed that Sontag has not conferred upon photography her prestigious seal of approval. But what else might one expect from someone who wrote, as early as 1964, "The world, our world is depleted, impoverished enough. Away with all duplicates of it, until we again experience more immediately what we have." That was in her celebrated essay "Against Interpretation." *On Photography* should probably have been called "Against Photography."

(c) The analyzing of sensibilities, those elusive tastes and attitudes which govern the way we look at the world:

Photography is preeminently the art of sensibility; for with rare exceptions, the photographer is not so much "making" something new, as registering a new way of looking at something which already exists. Sontag's real concern in *On Photography* is not with photographs per se, but rather with the way photographs train us to look at the world. To live in the modern world—whether or not one has ever "taken" a photograph—is to practice a form of "photographic seeing" (a way of "looking at reality as an array of potential photographs"). "In teaching us a new visual code," writes Sontag, "photographs alter and enlarge our notions of what is worth looking at and what we have a right to observe. They are a grammar and, even more importantly, an ethics of seeing."

(d) *A concern with surrealism as the art of "quotation" and radical juxtaposition* (a concern first evident in that "inventory of the world" which consumes the final pages of *Death Kit*, and later in her essays on Happenings and Cuban poster art):

A good portion of the new book is devoted to the thesis that photography fulfills the central aims of the surrealist movement in a way that painting never could. Of course, in one sense, the perceived connection between surrealism and photography is hardly new.

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Dali, for example, once referred to his invases as "hand-painted dream hotographs." But Sontag is not conerned here with the photographer's apacity for "objectifying" the dream nagery of classical surrealism. Self-onsciously artistic attempts to employ hotography in the service of surealistic principles—the work of Man Ray or Heartfield's photomontages—re dismissed as marginal. For Sontag, *ll* photographs are inherently surreal. Consider, for example, the surrealist's bsession with "automatism" (automatic writing and drawing). "What could be more surreal," she asks, "than an object that virtually produces itself and with a minimum of effort."

But an even more central aspect of photography's inherent surreality is its capacity for wrenching fragments of the world out of their natural contexts in the form of images and relocating them next to other photographs in radically new juxtapositions. Alluding to Lautréamont's famous phrase (which became a surrealist watchcry), Sontag argues that "It is photography that has best shown us how to juxtapose the sewing machine and the umbrella." But to treat the world like a "collage" which can be assembled and re-assembled at will is to deny the very notion of inherent "meaning." (Think of the prototypical college dorm room in which photographic posters of Mao, Einstein, and Groucho Marx hang next to one another, assuming equal pride of place.) This, I think, is the heart of Sontag's moral queasiness about photography: '. . . because the photograph is, always, an object in a context, (its) meaning is bound to drain away."

"A photograph," she argues, "could also be described as a quotation, which makes a book of photographs like a book of quotations." Significantly, *On Photography* contains no photographs; it ends instead with a brief anthology of quotations—an homage to photography's first important critic, Walter Benjamin, a passionate collector of quotations "whose surrealist sensibility," Sontag adds, "is the most profound of anyone's on record."

(e) *The "pathos" of the past:*

Sontag has always been fascinated by the "aura" that attaches itself to any remembrance of things past which manages to survive the relentless modern march of cultural displacement and planned obsolescence. Photography's ineluctable pathos derives from the fact that so much of what it records is, at the very moment, disappearing. (For example, family photo albums become a part of modern life just as the extended family goes on the decline.) This, I think, accounts for the book's tone which is elegiac rather than angry or hortatory. Perhaps this sense of pathos helps explain the extraordinary upsurge of interest in photography during the last 10 years. "It is a nostalgic time right now," writes Sontag, "and photographs actively promote nostalgia . . . Most subjects are, just by virtue of being photographed, touched with pathos." But despite its gentle and consoling nature, this pathos also contributes to an erosion of meaning:

> *A photograph of 1900 that was affecting then because of its subject, would, today, be more likely to move us because it is a photograph taken in 1900. The particular qualities and intentions of photographs tend to be swallowed up in the generalized pathos of time past.*

All of these sundry misgivings converge in a central moral objection to the photographic enterprise: that "promise inherent in photography from its very beginning: to democratize all experiences by translating them into images." The result is a levelling of meaning, a levelling which occurs in a variety of ways. She believes for example, that there exists a "tendency inherent in all photographs to accord value to their subjects." "To photograph," she argues, "is to confer importance." But here it is Sontag who appears to be doing the levelling, not photography. For the democratization of subject matter she speaks of is an integral part of the larger modernist project which culminates in the transcendence of content, not in the conferring of value upon it. When Edward Weston photographs a pepper in such a way that it begins to resemble a female nude, it is not the pepper upon which value has been conferred, but rather Weston's visionary way of seeing it. Similarly, Duchamp's readymades teach us that art (or importance) is not inherent in things, but in the way we look at things. (Perhaps as a tribute to Duchamp's famous "urinal," Weston photographed a series of toilet bowls in the 1920s.)

But to Sontag, photography not only confers importance upon the trivial and the vulgar. Even more objectionable to her is the tendency of photography to "inexorably beautify" the world. "There is probably no subject that cannot be beautified (by photography)" she writes.

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Granted, one can practice a mode of estheticizing perception that makes dull and perhaps oppressive realities more tolerable. But it's more difficult to accept her contention that "Nobody ever discovered ugliness through photographs. But many, through photographs have discovered beauty."

To those who've always seen Sontag as little more than a latter-day Bloomsbury esthete, it must come as quite a surprise to hear that she is now attacking this tendency to beautify the commonplace or the horrifying. But Sontag has always been more complicated than that. (Even in her notorious essay, "On Style," she argued that a heightened perception of form ultimately nourishes, rather than negates, the moral dimensions of consciousness.) And in *On Photography* she isn't really repudiating her commitment to esthetic autonomy; on the contrary, she's railing against what she perceives (in photography) to be a confusion of art and life (that tendency to "estheticize politics" which Walter Benjamin once cited as a primary characteristic of fascism).

As dubious as some of her arguments about the social consequences of photography may be, none of them is likely to create as great a furor as her comments about photography as an art—comments which strike me not only as wrong, but in many ways, inconsistent with her earlier arguments about the social functions of photography. Up to this point, her argument has focused on the ways in which photography transforms the "given" world; so one would assume that if nothing else, Sontag would permit photography to claim some sort of esthetic triumph over the world, even if it's achieved at considerable psychic and social expense.

But suddenly, when it comes time to discuss the efforts of formalist photographers to impose a unifying style on a wide variety of subject matter she argues on behalf of the recalcitrance, the stubborn integrity of such subject matter. Insisting that it makes sense that paintings are signed but that most photographs aren't, she claims that "In photography (as opposed to painting), the subject matter always pushed through . . . confounding signature." Clearly, *On Photography* means to be a book about the nature of the photographic medium and one does not necessarily expect from such a book extended appreciations of individual photographers. But Sontag succumbs to the McLuhanite fallacy: assuming that because the medium is the message, the differences between individuals who work in that medium are less significant than the ties that bind them.

Even though such an argument is destined to infuriate great formalist photographers like Aaron Siskind or Harry Callahan, it could, in a slightly different context, become the basis for a celebration of photography. To writers such as André Bazin and Siegfried Kracauer for example, the fact that the photographer exerts only limited control over the thing photographed is a blessing, not a curse, a potential source of "spirituality." Kracauer goes so far as to credit the cinema (whose essence, for him as well as for Bazin, derives from still photography) with "the redemption of physical reality." By denying the artist a triumph of personal style, by continually returning our attention to something in the "real" world, photography helps restore to us the world's body. Photography thus becomes an antidote for what Ortega y Gasset once called "the progressive disrealization of the world." Or so the argument goes.

Whether or not it's true, I suspect tha Bazin's and Kracauer's argument i ultimately of more help than Sontag's i explaining why the cinema and nov photography have commanded th allegiances of so many people in recen years. Both restore to art a balanc between the subjective imagination anc the pre-existing world. Both offer a way out of the formalist cul de sac withou necessitating a return to a naive realism

I don't fault Sontag for not citing this argument. But I do think she's guilty of wanting to have it both ways: attacking photography's "predatory" nature while denying its claim to artistic seriousness. And yet, all things considered, Sontag's book is probably the most ambitious, and certainly the most provocative, attempt yet at an esthetics of photography.

Roger Copeland

Roger Copeland writes frequently on film and dance, and teaches in the Inter-Arts program at Oberlin College.

Transatlantic Blues by Wilfrid Sheed

(Dutton; $9.95)

Among the current academic frauds is the contention that the best literary criticism these days is written by college professors. This is, in fact, no more true than it has ever been. The *bulk* of critical work is now handled by the weighty men and women of the universities, but no one who regards criticism as a species of literature can consider the stuff churned out of English departments as more than so much dutiful labor. Actually the best criticism of the past decade, judged by standards of style, wit, intelligence and concision, has been written by two men who earn their bread primarily as novelists, Gore Vidal and Wilfrid Sheed.

Both are good novelists, but superior critics. Vidal has lightened the pages of *The New York Review of Books*, while Sheed the critic was most prominent in the *New York Times Book Review* during John Leonard's spell as editor. His collection of short essays and reviews, *The Morning After*, published in 1972, and Vidal's *Homage to Daniel Shays* and *Matters of Fact and Fiction* stand beside the works of the academics like three fresh and crusty loaves beside stacks of Wonder Bread.

Now Sheed has issued his eighth book of fiction in a decade and a half, and its limitations as a novel provide reminders of his critical gifts. The hero of *Transatlantic Blues*, like the hero of Sheed's earlier *Max Jamison*, works best as a transmitter for all sorts of interesting opinions. Pendrid Chatsworth is an Englishman of aristocratic blood and vanishing fortune who grows famous doing documentaries and talk shows on American television. He is also a Catholic with an uninteresting compulsion to confess his sins. The themes of dual nationality and Catholicism are familiar material. Postwar England takes a beating here, and the Catholic Church fares even worse. Chatsworth's father has emigrated to America at the start of the Second World War, but is too snobbish to like it and moves the clan (which includes wife, daughter and Pendrid) back to England at war's end.

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nding it disagreeable, he removes once ore to America and dies there. Pen-id, whose formative years had been ent in the States and whose attempts love with an English girl are ustrated by her lesbianism, has been appy enough to return to the USA, but ow he agrees reluctantly to return to ngland with his mother and sister. He nters Paisley College, Oxford. "Unlike ome of the other bad-breath colleges, aisley did not strive to impress." He waggers his way through, unaware ntil the end that the wealth he is lashing around is all that his father has eft him. Once he leaves school, he must ive on his salary. At Oxford he plays the obust American. He recalls, "I went usting through like O. J. Simpson (nice hap, by the way). This was the American century, and the wooliest Rhodes scholars were making out like hunder."

All the while he holds to his sniffish Catholicism, and even gets one young Oxford woman to conform to his tandards. He caddishly turns on her nd sleeps with someone else. His eligion serves as a front for private gonies he enjoys enduring. After ompleting school, he heads for Califor-ia, where he trades on his English ccent and secures a job spinning ecords in Fresno. Before long he is in he big time, having changed his name to Monty at the request of Hollywood's romotional geniuses: it seems more Englishy" than Pendrid. Before long he s honored as an "all around good guy" of he airwaves and is receiving awards for is humanitarianism.

He is an unlovable character; his self-ortrait is highly uncharitable, por-raying himself as alternately pushy and tandoffish and as consistently ypocritical. Also, he is supposed to have ed a very public life, but none of this is escribed here. Three-fourths of the ook deals with Chatsworth's educa-ion, which allows him to pop off in the irection of both sides of the Atlantic, ut behind this lurks the novel that ight have been. Chatsworth's stardom ppears full-blown; the novel is written s a recollection of early days from the erspective of a later retreat. There is othing wrong with this, but the elevision news business is still waiting or its Sinclair Lewis. No one has yet inned down the Gantrys of the air-aves; Sheed, who at first seems to be etting up for a shot at the subject, never eally gives it a try. If there is any major isappointment in *Transatlantic Blues*, this it.

But it is impolite to belabor someone for not writing a different book. If Sheed wants to write about Catholics torn between England and America, and further torn by their Catholicism between the natural drives and the immortal soul, that is his business. Chatsworth's incidental reflections provide epigrammatic critiques of two cultures. "I am condemned to shuttle between the two countries that tear at my guts; allowed, like an Elizabethan beggar, to linger in neither one." These epigrams are never dull, and are without doubt the highlights of *Transatlantic Blues*. Comparing the temples of Christendom Chatworth writes, "The air is thin in American churches; it lacks the gamy smell of England, the delicate sense of rot. Once you have sampled Rome as perversion, it's hard to go back to meat-and-potatoes Catholicism." Or this, on the difference between the run of Englishmen and himself: "On all sides, us? Regrettably they do not flesh out characters in old political cartoons, and vices to match. I have a face like bubble gum and no voice at all. I have washed away the blueprint by painting over it too often."

But where do these one-liners leave us? Regrettably they do not round out the character and let us see him and his world in the round; rather, they prompt the feelings that Sheed would be better stripping away the disguises and sitting down in his critic's chair.

Mitchell S. Ross

Mitchell S. Ross is author of *The Literary Politicians* (Doubleday).

Ibsen
by Harold Clurman
(Macmillan; $8.95)

It is strange to think of Henrik Ibsen as an avant-garde playwright in our time. Compared to Strindberg's expressionism, Brecht's alienation effects, Pirandello's illusionism, or Beckett's peculiar drama of inaction, the work of a box-set realist might be difficult to reconcile with the ferment of experimental theater. Yet Ibsen was the first great innovator of the modern stage. Creating a theater which was truly contemporary in its ideas as well as its techniques, Ibsen shaped his stagecraft into the newness of realism. So comprehensive was his adaptation of dramatic form that almost 150 years since his birth practitioners as well as critics of the theater are still reacting with enthusiasm to the excitement of his technical mastery.

Ibsen's revolution in modern drama was his recognition that realism, which pretends to mirror actual life, was a theatrical stylization like any other dramatic convention. The path of realism required the invention of a language and a set, a bold concept of acting and directing, lighting and costuming, conforming to the stage requirements of the new day. When Nora walks out of her doll's house, the audience must hear her slam a "real" door, not see her pass through an opening in some canvas backdrop waving in the wind. When Dr. Stockmann, enemy of the people, rails against the silent majority, he must do so before a "real" crowd, not some hastily assembled conglomeration of local talent standing nervously on the boards for the first time. And when Hedda Gabler burns a manuscript, she must throw it into a "real" fire, not the ersatz flames of romantic melodrama. "What I desired to depict were human beings," wrote Ibsen with his usual candor, "and therefore I would not let them talk in the language of the gods." No more clever asides. No more soliloquies. Above all, no more lyric lamentations giving the cue for waving of arms and beating of breasts. In their place Ibsen substituted a compact language reflecting the everyday speech of his audience in situations not merely identifiable, but recognizable as their very own.

There was method to what often seemed madness to his contemporaries. For Ibsen's *mise en scène* was the dramatic and scenic metaphor for that conflict of ideas which became the main focus of his staged reality. The truthfulness of his argument could only be articulated with clarity when measured against the theater's fidelity to the details of everyday life. The very tightness of a script's

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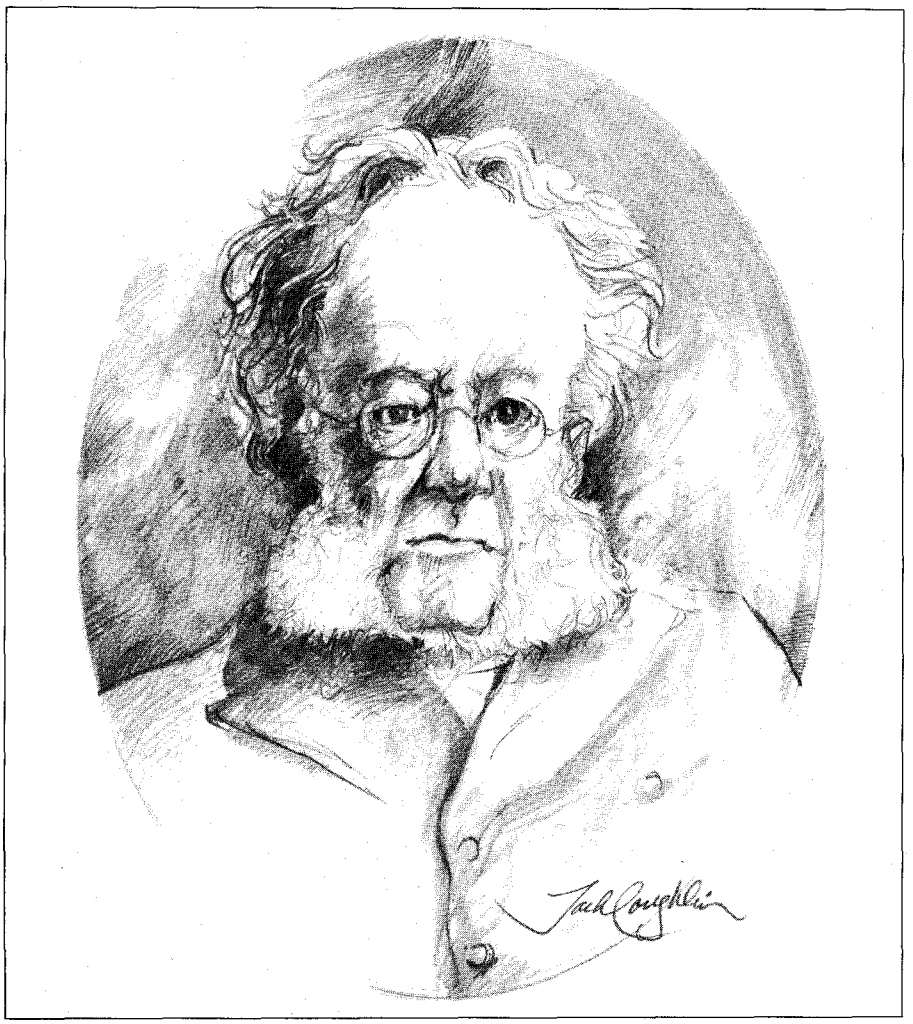
structure, the short, rapid strokes for building a character or unfolding a story, are the stylistic counterparts of that scrupulousness at the moral center of his imaginative vision. Harold Clurman is exactly right when he states that all of Ibsen's plays are single acts in one large magnum opus. For beyond the deceptive facade of photographic objectivity, each



Henrik Ibsen by Jack Coughlin

Ibsen play is fundamentally conceptual and ideological. Each is a vehicle for an idea. Each asks a question about man and his society. And though each offers its audience a slightly modified explanation for man's behavior and responsibility in a social sphere, in performance each work leaves us with what Clurman appropriately calls "a permanent challenge." The vitality of Ibsen's experiment in dramatic form is to be found, then, in the uncompromising reality of his search for moral certitude in a changing world where old beliefs have died and new hope has not yet been born.

Clurman, founder of the Group Theatre and eminent director, who has, curiously, never directed an Ibsen production, finds nobility in his subject's disquiet. When seen side by side, the plays are ripe with contradictions. The hero of *Brand* says, "I am tired of fighting alone." But soon Dr. Stockmann will conclude that "the strongest man in the world is the man who stands alone." The element of self-rebuttal becomes steadily more evident as the experimentation in dramatic realism develops, for Ibsen could not assert anything without suggesting in a subsequent play the possible validity of its opposite. That is why every one of his 26 plays contains the seed of another: everything basic to life in this world remains an open question. If the series of plays points to an Ibsen who is never wholly sure of anything, that is because every truth his characters endorse is in the final analysis only a half-truth. He draws characters regaled in the integrity of a particular truth—what Clurman calls in *On Directing* "the spine" of their existence on stage—for Ibsen portrays every part of truth as precious. The complication in Ibsen's world is that truth is usually different for each person. The dialogue Clurman uncovers in Ibsen's spirit thus takes its most realistic form in drama, the art of conflict.

Ibsen's work, forever evading what he calls in *The League of Youth* "the miserab satisfaction of being consistent therefore eludes any neat system c critical synchronization. In *A Doll's Hou* we see that the sexual politics c marriage based on self-deception spel disaster for two innocent partners; i *The Wild Duck* we learn that it may be disservice to many people to show ther the whole truth about themselves. Eve in the late plays, where characters ar racked by the inner conflict underlyin the social, "the signs," as Maximus say in *Emperor and Galilean*, "conflict." Ibsen' self-contention, the constant shift in hi intellectual and emotional attitudes provides the inspiration for each new play and introduces the uneasy note o modernism to his work as a whole. Fo beyond every moral assertion, every program of social and individual actior championed by his characters, Ibser presents us with a dramatization of the indissoluble dilemma, the perpetua doubt. "Oh—ideals, ideals!," Mrs. Alving cries out in *Ghosts*. "What about the Truth?"

The consequences of Ibsen's theatricalization of the question mark have been enormous. Up to his moment in history no one since Shakespeare has had greater influence on the western world's notion of what its theater should be like. And possibly no playwright, including Shakespeare, has been so skillful in making the exposition of conditions preceding the immediate action of a play dramatic in itself. Clurman has undertaken his new study with a total appreciation of this "literary engineering." As a man of the theater he has an unfailing eye for the potential of each script's materialization in performance. In defining the essence of Ibsen's realistic technique in creating characters he quotes Shaw's advice to actors: "all roles, including those considered unsympathetic or ludicrous, should be played as if each of the impersonated characters was justified in everything he or she does." The technique reaches an apex in *John Gabriel Borkman* (played with such power in 1976 by Ralph Richardson, Wendy Hiller and Peggy Ashcroft at the National Theatre in London). Clurman understands very well how the play's concise dialogue with its rise to poetic utterance brings "massiveness" to the characterization of the three central figures. Verbally and visually the final scenes, "among Ibsen's greatest achievements," attain heroic proportion. Here Ibsen's transformation of the drama is complete; his "big people," his "personages of broad dimension," rival

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e majesty and range of those gigantic
aracters we remember from the
assic and romantic repertory.

oday, when audiences respond
vorably to "the new realism," we
cognize the freshness and vitality of a
road new movement in the arts. In
bsen's day any talk of realism in the
eater was not only new, but
onoclastic. On stage he invented "lies
ke truth" which continue to impress us,
or the form his questions take strike us
ith their immediacy and clarity. His
ialectical posture is our own. "To be a
oet means essentially to see," he mused
ot so long ago, "to see in such a way
hat whatever is seen is perceived by the
udience just as the poet saw it." In
Clurman's study the unity of Ibsen's
anon is in its contradictions. Yet beneath the firm inquiry, the continual battle with uncertainty, lies the one deep conviction shining through all his work: whether induced by the pursuit of individual freedom, artistic perfection, or intellectual eminence, *the coldness of the heart* kills. "To create is beautiful," observed this pioneering playwright, "but to live in reality can now and then be much more beautiful." Ibsen's revolutionary accomplishment, as Harold Clurman so soundly illustrates, is that when we sit in his theater we live for a few hours in that staged reality he has so deftly made in the shadow of our own.

Enoch Brater

Enoch Brater teaches drama since Ibsen at the University of Michigan.

Argentina: The Peronist Myth, An Essay on the Cultural Decay in Argentina After the Second World War
by Roberto Aizcorbe
(Exposition Press; $10)

Argentina, 1943-1976: The National Revolution and Resistance
by Donald C. Hodges
(University of New Mexico Press; $9.95)

Today it is difficult to imagine that a
nere half-century ago the Argentine
Republic appeared on every list of
'countries of the future." It was not
nerely wealthy, but (as South American
ountries went) "white", and—as
Argentines never tire of reminding us—
ivilized, sophisticated, and refined.
Hardly less impressive was the country's
vell-deserved reputation for political
tability. The half-century before 1930
aw an uninterrupted succession of
ivilian, constitutional governments,
nd what was even more impressive,
fter 1916 the country's landowning
lass managed to graft democratic forms
nto a fundamentally oligarchical social
tructure.

Contrast that picture—however
dealized it may be—with the spectacle
fforded by the Argentina of the present
lay. An inflation rate several times that of Western Europe. A political system which, having experimented with virtually every form except revolutionary Marxism, is in a state of total bankruptcy. A quiet, but devastating civil war between left and right, in which the weapons are those employed by terrorists, but the victims often innocent bystanders. And perhaps what is worst of all, a people of extraordinary talent, energy and attractiveness utterly demoralized, many given over to visions of the Apocalypse.

One might imagine that a tragedy of these proportions, so rich in human drama, and also, in implications for this and other new countries of the 19th century, would have attracted the attention of our best social scientists and philosophers. Such, however, has not been the case. Except for a brief flash of interest generated by the return of Perón in 1973 and the brief reign of his widow, the American press has refused to take Argentina seriously; in recent times editors have tended to treat it as a kind of political freak show, best consigned to the back pages except when short of front-page copy.

In such a situation, serious information about that country is extremely difficult to come by. And what is worse, that which exists is the work of writers with a special pleading, who find themselves—by sheer default—in full command of the field. The task of the reviewer then becomes to place both author and treatment in their fuller political context. This is preeminently the case with the two books under review, one by a partisan of the present military government in Argentina, the other by that increasingly common phenomenon in our midst, the American "Latin American" revolutionary. In spite of the enormous amount of information which both writers serve up to the reader, neither is likely to contribute much to our understanding of Argentine events. For both assume a greater knowledge of that country than most Americans are likely to have. And although supposedly directed at a wider

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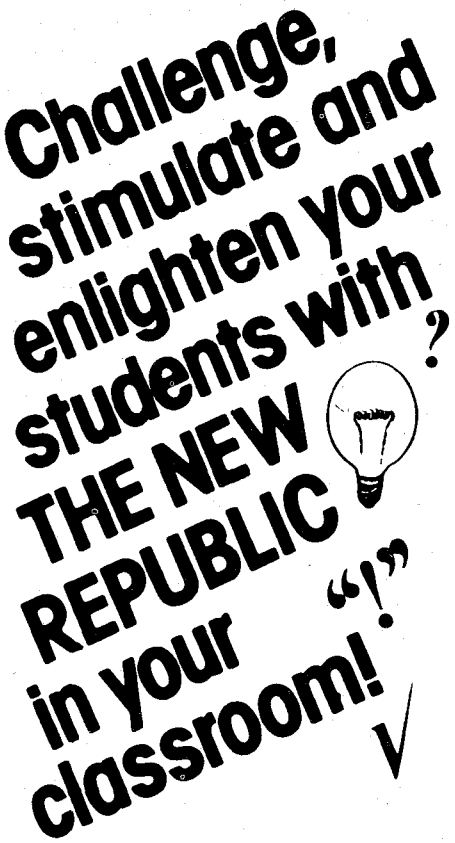

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reading public, both are in fact levelled at very special hypothetical audiences. Hodges' volume seems destined for some first-year Berkeley graduate student of sociology, long on indignation and short on just about everything else. And Aizcorbe seems intent upon touching the heartstrings of Argentina's declining generation of oligarchs, who can recall, 'midst tears and nostalgia, the good old days before Perón "when you could get a servant for a favor."

To take Aizcorbe first. The dust jacket represents him as a serious journalist of "democratic and conservative views," silenced, we are told, when his own magazine *El Burgués*, was "closed by Peronist guerillas." Perhaps, indeed, this is the way that Mr. Aizcorbe's journal met its end; but as to its "democratic and conservative views," I feel compelled to divulge that the one copy shown me in 1973 featured two photographs on facing pages—"Argentina, Yesterday and Today." One showed Princess Isabel de Borbón of Spain in her carriage on a state visit to Argentina in 1910; the other, a photograph of Isabel Perón taken during her days in the early '50s as a cabaret dancer in Panama, wearing a string of rubber bananas and little else. Both the photographs and this book seem intent upon conveying the same message. "Argentina," Mr. Aizcorbe writes, "has not always been the country of Isabel Perón and Fanny Foxe."

This is true enough, but whether *The Peronist Myth* can explain why is quite another matter. According to the author, Argentina in the late '20s was an "almost perfect democracy" (what this means is not clear, since the author admits he does not understand democracy to be necessarily synonymous with majority rule). Its economic ruin was brought about by Perón's premature mobilization of the Argentine working class in the 1940s, which mobilization, he says, caused the economic surplus to be devoured before the process of industrialization was complete. This point established, the rest of the book goes on to chronicle at considerable length what the author chooses to regard as "cultural decay". By this he means, in the first instance, a decline in the quality of the Argentine population through "the integration of aboriginal elements" (read, immigration from Paraguay and Bolivia). In the second, he refers to the abdication by the Argentine aristocracy of its responsibility to lay down the norms of civilized society, ceding the field to a "revolutionary café society [which] has introduced divorce, homosexuality . . . trips abroad [and the language of violence." Virtually everything on the Argentine cultural horizon these days reminds Mr. Aizcorbe of this decay—from psychoanalysis to television, from post Conciliar Catholicism to abortion. By a rather prolix (and certainly for the reader, exhausting) route, we arrive at the idea that this cultural decay prepared the way for the return of Perón in 1973 and the subsequent enthronement of his widow, who was still in power when most of this book was written.

The Peronist Myth is remarkable not so much for what it says as for what it leaves out. Mr. Aizcorbe has a deep appreciation for Argentine political institutions as they existed in the 1920s, but he fails to tell us that their expiration was due not to Perón, but to the very class to which he belongs, which in 1930 staged a military coup which not only deposed a popularly-elected government broadly representative of the Argentine people, but installed a succession of fraudulent conservative governments which ruled over the country for the next 13 years. When the military took over in 1943 and Colonel Juan Perón came to figure prominently in national politics, many of the same conservatives for whom Mr. Aizcorbe has so much admiration joined his ranks. True, he and his second wife Eva were hopelessly *parvenus*—a bitter pill especially for their wives and mothers to swallow—but along with the Catholic hierarchy and the military they saw him as the last, best hope against Communism. (This latter was never a real possibility in Argentina. What was meant by "Communism" was liberal democracy, secular education, divorce and a more pluralistic social order.) One would never guess from reading *The Peronist Myth* that from 1943 to approximately 1954 the Perón regime was hailed as a bulwark against Marxism liberalism, Protestantism, Masonry, and the Yanqui peril by reactionaries the world over, and that most of the Marxists and liberals whom Mr. Aizcorbe so much dislikes languished during that period in Argentine jails or foreign exile.

During the late '40s Perón was able to be all things to all men because he had at his disposal an enormous foreign exchange surplus inherited from the Second World War. Once these cash balances were used up by patronage welfare, and prestige projects such as the purchase of Argentina's British owned railways, or battleships like the

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esidente Perón from Vickers, the leader n out of ideas and sought to make the igarchy and the Catholic Church take ne blame for the country's eteriorating economic situation. An nimaginative strategist who always layed the main chance, in a crisis ituation Perón showed a startling nability to improvise. This explains not nly the relative ease with which he was verthrown in 1955, but his tendency to grasp indiscriminately in all directions—or example, his gradual adoption of leftist" rhetoric during his years of exile n Spain. Aizcorbe chose to take Perón's pronouncements from this latter period it face value, as did not a few Argenines. But once firmly reestablished in power in 1973, Perón proved no more a Marxist than Mr. Aizcorbe. He was then what he had always been—a consummate opportunist who knew how to use people. The same leftist militants who in the late '60s had sacrificed their energies and some, their lives) undermining the post-Peron military regimes through systematic terror, were now told to get n line and join the Government Above Classes, the Social Pact, and the Union for National Reconstruction. That Mr. Aizcorbe would choose to call this performance "Marxist" tells us a good deal more about him than it does about his country.

The confusion in left-wing Argentine ranks over what Peronism was and what t had become is curiously reflected in Professor Donald Clark Hodges' *Argentina, 1943-1976*. An American who spent part of his childhood and early adolescence in Argentina, Professor Hodges has hitherto been known principally for learned textual exegesis of the writings of Marx and Engels in *Science and Society*. This book, based on a trunk full of 'doctrinal" left wing journals and manifestoes smuggled out of Argentina shortly after the military coup of 1975, displays considerable dialectical skill, but betrays scant knowledge of matters Argentine, and tends to place the hurly-burly of everyday politics in a hopelessly theoretical and abstract context.

Perhaps a little background would help. Until approximately 1965, most Argentine leftists continued to sustain that the Perón regime was and always had been "fascist." This posed no small theoretical difficulty, however, for would-be Marxists, for a decade after Peron's overthrow it was painfully obvious that he was still the idol of the Argentine working class. In fact, after 10 years of *de facto* governments, cheerless austerity plans, and continued economic deterioration, in retrospect Perón looked better than ever, not only to workers who were old enough to remember his rule, but to their children, who were beginning to come onto a distinctly unpromising labor market. Having found it impossible to wean the Argentine working class from their addiction to Perón in favor of the True Revolution (Marxism-Leninism), a growing number began to reason that perhaps rather than being the Argentine equivalent of fascism, Perón had been the True Revolution after all, but like Christ at Emmanus, in disguise. In this light, Perón's failure to transform Argentina into a socialist country was their failure to recognize his movement as fundamentally popular and anti-imperialist and to join it, properly orienting it. Many also argued that as things stood at that time (1965), Perón returning to Argentina *would have to be socialist*, partly because of the force of "world historical circumstances," partly because the Peronist movement had fundamentally changed its nature over the years of exile, proscription and persecution. (Perón's *ex cathedra* pronouncements from Madrid were often cited in defense of the latter proposition.)

It is to salvage this review of Peronism and the historic decision of the Argentine left to subsume Marxism within it—both now discredited by events—that Hodges has written this brilliant if somewhat bizarre little volume. In spite of its title, it resembles less a political history than a theoretical text in alchemy which explores all of the conceivable formulas for the transformation of lead to gold. One cannot dispute of them in a vacuum, since they all *sound* plausible enough—as long as one is not excessively familiar with the essential properties of both elements. Unfortunately for Professor Hodges, we are talking here not about inert properties but Argentine politics, and not in a vacuum but as a matter of record.

To put an enormously ponderous and overly-"clever" book in sharp focus—this study argues, briefly, that Peronism must be understood not so much as a personalist movement, but a particular phase of the Argentine Socialist Revolution. At times Perón is consubstantial with that revolution, at times not. But wherever the revolution "is," there is Peronism, whether Perón himself happens to favor or oppose it. This is a convenient device whereby Professor Hodges can hail the "good" Perón of the 1940s, who nationalizes the British railways, defies Washington's diplomatic embargo, and decrees across-the-board wage raises for workers; and denounce the "bad" Perón who returns in the 1970s with the same old right-wing gang—and still insist that Peronism and the Argentine revolution are one and the same. To the foreign reader, this might seem totally unnecessary, but an Argentine would immediately get the point.

If Mr. Aizcorbe has an unfortunate tendency to belabor the obvious, Hodges' chief failing is a tendency to ignore it altogether. Peronism is indeed a complex subject, but not so complex that its basic essence cannot be simply stated. It has always been one and the same thing—precisely what Peron decided it was, nothing more, nothing less. It has always been a fundamentally conservative movement. It has always been anti-American, although whether this makes it truly "revolutionary" or "anti-imperialist" depends wholly upon one's ideological frame of reference. It has always been dominated by what Hodges calls the "labor bureaucracy and the party's ultraright wing." Most important of all, Perón's huge majorities in the Argentine elections of 1946, 1952, and 1973 were not based on working class support alone, but that of the middle class, the military, the Catholic Church, landowners, industrialists, and intellectuals. Hodges attributes the parlous state of the Peronist left to a failure to "democratize the Peronist movement, to reconstruct it on the basis of a left-of-center coalition." Of course Peronism has never been democratic, but to reconstruct it on a purely left-center basis would in all likelihood have closed to it all avenues of power. The problem for the Argentine left, in fact, has not been the authoritarian nature of Peronism, but the fact that its leadership has always been far too representative of its broader following. Most Argentines, workers included, do not want socialism—they want a capitalism that works. Perón didn't deliver it, and maybe no one else can either, but that does not mean that Peronists want socialism under some other name.

Were it not for geographical labels, it

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would be difficult for the casual reader to imagine that *The Peronist Myth* and *Argentina, 1943-1976* were really about the same country. One volume describes a society plunged into a sea of decadence, expressed through sexual-political radical chic; the other, an armed camp unevenly divided between fascist-imperialists and false (*e.g.*, "unrevolutionary") Peronists on one side, and the "true" Peronists on the other (a miniscule faction, with the working class gratuitously added). Perhaps neither book can stand alone, but taken together they do at least give us some idea of the ideological and perceptual gap that divides and rends a great people, and inspires the violence which makes today's Argentine news such a somber subject.

Mark Falcoff

Mark Falcoff is Associate Professor of History at the University of Oregon, and an editor of *Prologue to Perón: Argentina in Depression and War, 1930-1943* (Univ. of Calif. Press).

The Factory Girls: A Collection of Writings on Life and Struggles in the New England Factories of the 1840's by the Factory Girls Themselves, and the Story, in Their Own Words of the First Trade Unions of Women Workers in the United States

edited by Philip S. Foner

(University of Illinois Press; $15)

Woman suffrage leader Harriet H. Robinson recalled with nostalgia her years spent working in the Lowell textile mills in the 1830s and 1840s. "I do not recall any particular hardship connected with this life, except getting up so early in the morning," she wrote, "But in every other respect it was a pleasant life. We were not hurried any more than was for our good and no more work was required of us than we were able easily to do." Robinson was not alone in her fondness for life at Lowell. Mill girls (as the women referred to themselves) published poems and essays in their own literary magazine, the *Lowell Offering*, praising their opportunities for cultural enrichment and moral uplift. Few labor historians or scholars in women's history ever challenged these readily available sources or doubted that Francis Cabot Lowell's industrial paternalism was anything other than a successful, if brief, experiment.

Recently, however, some historians skeptical of the accepted view of mill life have mined long neglected, militant magazines and periodicals that voiced some mill girls' dissatisfaction with their condition and their demands for change. Lowell's female labor force worked long, hard hours on power looms. The girls' carefully regimented lives in company owned and chaperoned boardinghouses, as well as the much publicized evening lectures and required chapel were all part of a facade designed to camouflage industrial exploitation, according to this fresh testimony.

Philip Foner, a professor of history at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, has made a career of exposing the oppression of workers and minority groups in America. He has written a four volume history of the American labor movement as well as numerous other books dealing with the struggle of the poor and exploited in the United States. In *Factory Girls*, a documentary history of life and protest in the New England mills between 1820 and 1850, Foner makes readily accessible a selection of sources that contradict the sunny version of mill life and introduce a fresh perspective on an important chapter in both the American labor movement and the struggle for women's rights.

In the first eight sections, Foner presents documents that offer two opposite versions of life at Lowell and other New England mills. Extracts from the *Lowell* (later *New England*) *Offering* celebrate the girls' moral virtues and th simple pleasures of mill life such as th large library and the Lyceum lecture Previously disregarded journals an newspapers, however, suggest harsher existence. Factory girls wer awakened at 4:30 A.M. to begin a da laboring 12 to 14 hours in poorly li badly ventilated buildings with only half hour for breakfast and another hal hour for midday dinner. By the end o such an exhausting schedule, the girl obviously had little energy left fo lectures or reading. Wages for a six da week averaged $1.75 plus board, usuall worth an additional $1.45, at best. Man girls who planned a brief stay to earn enough to pay their fathers' debts o help their brothers through college remained for years.

A former mill girl who became a militant writer, Sarah G. Bagley charged that the *Offering* was a captive voice o the companies. She and others publishe their views in local newspapers and in the women's column of the *Voice o Industry*, a male labor journal. Foner's documents include Bagley's denunciation of the mill owners for cutting wages that were already abysmally low and fo increasing work loads to boost profits She pointed out that the long hours o labor left the girls with little energy fo moral and intellectual improvement.

When the male labor movement was in its infancy, some factory girls at Lowell and other mills bravely sought to organize collective action. They formed Female Labor Reform Associations during the 1840s to press their demands for decent wages and improved working conditions. Their courageous strikes earned the women the respect of male organizers. Though the era's socia mores precluded equal membership in the same labor organizations, the female Associations were soon invited to send representatives to meetings of the all-male New England Workingmen's Association.

Several former mill girls rose to prominence in the Association move ment. In addition to the writings and speeches of Sarah G. Bagley, Foner includes selections from the work of Huldah Stone and Mehitabel Eastman Those pioneers in the women's labor movement travelled from town to town protesting conditions in the mills and organizing those who worked in them.

The mill girls agitated for a 10 hour day even before child labor laws and other legislation regulating hours and conditions of work were matters of serious debate. The Associations brought

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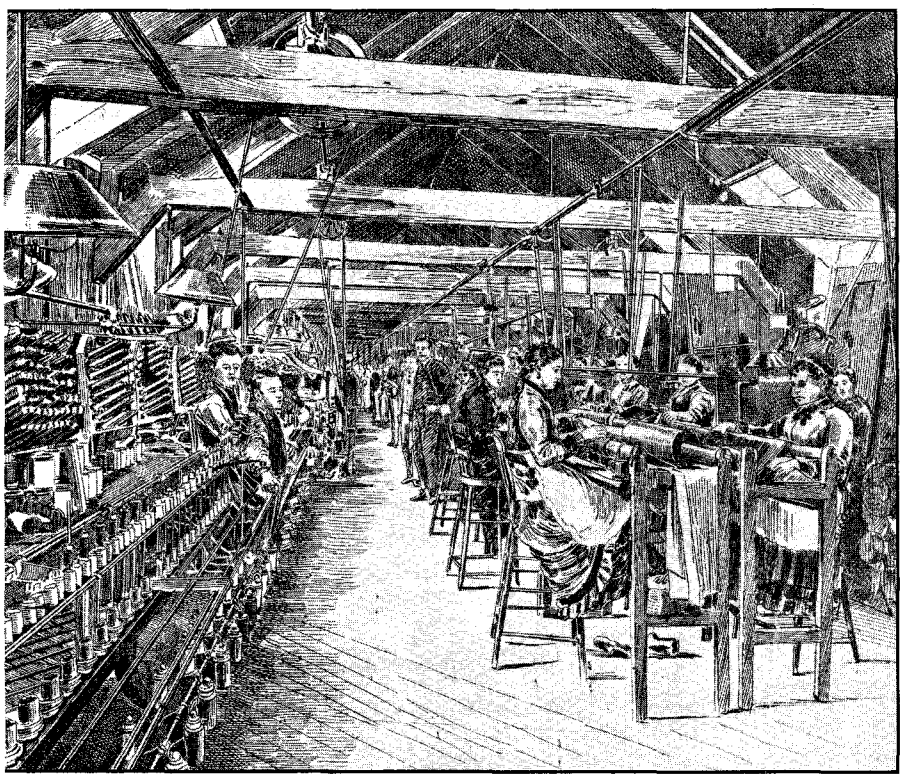
ıe issue before the Massachusetts tate Legislature, but the 10 hour bill ‹pired in committee thanks to the ifforts of William Schouler, a legislator ›yal to the mill owners. The documents escribe how the mill girls, though not ligible to vote, campaigned against chouler and later claimed part of the



19th century New England textile mill. Courtesy of The Bettmann Archive.

credit for blocking his re-election.

In several of the documents, mill girls likened their oppression to that endured by the South's black slaves. One indignant woman defied any opponent of Southern slavery to "produce a section of the 'black code' of any State" that gave a plantation driver as much power over his slaves as that enjoyed by factory overseers in the North. The analogy inspired some mill girls to speak out in support of abolitionism.

Their experiences made the mill girls especially outspoken in the struggle for women's rights. They found ammunition in the arguments of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the Grimke Sisters, and Susan B. Anthony. The mill girls demanded full citizenship for women, including suffrage, and equal pay for equal work. One mill writer quoted in Foner's documents observed that female public school teachers received about one third the salary of their male counterparts. "If a certain amount of labor is performed," she wrote, "it can make no difference by any manner or rational reasoning, by whom that labor is done."

By 1850, the mills were undergoing a major change in their labor force. A demographic shift was changing mill life. Over a million Irish immigrants fleeing the potato famine in their native land began to replace the girls in New England's factories. Irish laborers were abundant, worked for lower wages, and their exploitation did not need to be disguised by unctuous talk of cultural and spiritual enrichment.

Some native-born girls continued to work in the mills and to voice their dissatisfaction. Like their sisters of an earlier time, they too complained of the low wages and long hours. One mill poetess vowed,

No more will I take my Shaker and shawl
And hurry to the mill;
No more will I work so pesky hard
To earn a dollar bill.

The editor of a collection of unfamiliar writings bears a responsibility to explain the significance of each document and the context in which it was issued, while resisting the temptation to impose his own analysis of the material upon the reader. Philip Foner bears his responsibilities gracefully. His introductory essay, the brief explanations that precede each section of the volume, and the notes that follow each section are informative, without overwhelming the documents or dampening their impact.

One can only share Foner's dismay that Aileen Kraditor, Miriam Schneer, and Nancy Cott overlooked the militant factory girls in their respective documentary histories of the women's movement in America. They thereby kept alive the mill owners' myth that the factories were finishing schools for Yankee farm girls. Foner's book is designed to refute that myth rather than supply a balanced view of mill life in New England. It should encourage others to dig deeper in their studies of women in the American labor movement.

Alan M. Kraut

Alan M. Kraut is an Assistant Professor of History at The American University.

TRB, *from page 2*

outlined what he wanted, and he got most of it through, too, a splendid series of Kennedy-Johnson social reforms. Sympathy went out to him and he was applauded 79 times.

From then on, alas, he had to begin to explain why we were in Vietnam. In 1965 it was to resist "aggression" and to prevent "a much larger war." In 1966 he said it was to save "Asia"; in 1967, he said again it was to prevent "a larger war."

The undercurrent of opposition peeps through the rhetoric; he was happy to report in the State of the Union speech of 1968 that "next month we begin our eighth year of uninterrupted prosperity." But he acknowledged "a certain restlessness—a questioning" in the land. The war had caught up with him by now; he decided not to run. Even so he told Congress, in 1969, "I am glad to say that in the fiscal year ending June 30, 1969, we are going to have, not a deficit" (he paused dramatically) "but a $2.4 billion surplus!" What a yell.

America got Nixon after that. In 1970 he spoke inspirationally of "the lift of a driving dream," and used exactly the same phrase again next year. In quite a different vein Nixon surprised many by a vigorous assault on the welfare system, a "monstrous, consuming outrage . . . Let us place a floor under the income of every family in America." This was in Nixon's Disraeli phase. As to Vietnam he was reassuring. In 1971, and the year following, he said that things were going well. He began to speak of it, oddly, in the past tense. In 1973, for example, he said that America was "at peace after a long and trying war." (Talks were being held in Paris.) In 1974, Nixon airily solved the energy problem, saying that his "Project Independence" would make us self-sufficient in no time.

That brings us to Jerry Ford. He

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inherited recession and energy crisis and announced disarmingly in 1975 that "the state of the Union is not good." The nation should reduce oil imports a million barrels a day, he said, "and by two million per day by the end of 1977." (We have, of course, recklessly *increased* our imports.)

That's the story, more or less. In 1976 Ford urged America to snap out of its post-Vietnam blues. "I say it is time to quit downgrading ourselves as a nation," he said. But the country still remembered some of its agony, and elected Jimmy Carter. So now it's his turn to speak. You may identify some of the old themes this week.

Correspondence, *from page 7*

central problems in the present farm crisis, it underestimates both the urgency for relief and the possible political consequences if nothing is done.

Farmers here point out that their prices are roughly at 1946 levels while costs have doubled or tripled since then, and they observe that wages and profits are not exactly keyed to 1946 levels. In effect, they are asking that the parity formula be invoked to provide an escalator mechanism for setting farm price floors. Older farmers recall that during World War II and for a few years thereafter prices were supported at 90 percent of parity with small cash payments, a system which worked fairly well until crippled by Ezra Benson and scuttled by Earl Butz, with help from key Democrats, as well. I suspect that most farmers would support your proposal for an international food stamp program so that the cost of subsidized exports would be borne by taxpayers generally and not by farmers alone via low farm prices.

While many farmers are indeed ambivalent about "freedom to do as one pleases," I think that the great majority realize that the day of *laissez faire* is a pipe dream and that relief through political channels is essential, especially now that the National Farmers Organization seems unable to mobilize farmers into a gigantic collective bargaining combine. Farmers who I talk with are beginning to view "populist" Carter as a faker and "farmer" Bergland as a traitor.

The political consequences of a continued unwillingness to act on the part of Democrats will likely be a desertion of farmers to the ranks of Republicans in 1978 and 1980. It is probable that Democratic incumbents in the farm belt are already in serious jeapordy, witness the Republican landslide in northwestern Minnesota when a special election was held last year to fill Bergland's seat after he joined the Carter cabinet. Many farmers might prefer to vote populistic rather than Republican; but locked into the two party system, they see little alternative to punishing the "bastards" in office at the moment by voting for the party out of office. Being out of office, the Republicans are free to make grand promises as did Eisenhower in 1952 when he promised "not 90 but 100 percent of parity." This strategy might work again for the Republicans in 1980, but the Republican candidate might be much more dangerous than the bumbling Ike.

Democrats: Wake Up!

James M. Youngdale
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Chairperson's advice

To the editors:

Your analysis of the plight of Ken Curtis and other prospective candidates to chair the Democratic National Committee was quite correct ("It's My Party," (*TNR*, Dec. 24 & 31, 1977), in particular the observations on the change in the nature of the DNC.

The President and prospective DNC chairman John White should know that the DNC cannot and should not return to its docile role during the Johnson years. Indeed, if the DNC 10 years ago had warned Johnson of the dangers of his Viet Nam policy, he might have been re-elected for a second term. If President Carter today will but listen to the warnings of the DNC, he will find his re-election easier.

Michael N. Bleicher
State Chairperson
Democratic Party of Wisconsin

A wait and see attitude

To the editors:

It is apparent from "The Droopy Dollar," (*TNR*, Dec. 24 & 31, 1977) that Japan and West Germany have littl regard for United States economi policy, the health of the world economy or the value of the American dollar. Th United States took initiatives to stabliz the world economic picture; we asked the Japanese and Germans to go alon with these initiatives. Instead, they decided to take a "wait and see" approach. We keep tariff barriers off and let imports flood our markets; they wait and see. We pile up an $18 billion trade deficit; they wait and see. Sure, they "wait and see." They wait until our dollar is low enough, see that our trade deficit is large enough, then take belated action.

I suggest that the next time the United States takes any action which requires "international cooperation," it should wait and see whether it will get any support from its so-called allies.

Thomas G. Welshko
Baltimore, Maryland

Scene of the crime

To the editors:

It is slightly incorrect to claim, as TRB does, that Huey Long was shot in the "rotunda" of the Louisiana State Capitol because the 34-story building does not have such a room ("Son of Kingfish," *TNR*, Dec. 24 & 31, 1977).There is a rather ornate Memorial Hall (which would have been a fitting scene for the crime) but the shooting, quite untheatrically, occurred in a rear corridor leading to the governor's office. Bullet holes in the marble walls are still visible.

Jim Deutsch
Greenville, Mississippi

Prospects for ERA

To the editors:

"Deadline for ERA" (*TNR*, Dec. 17, 1977) raises valid questions about the wisdom of extending the ratification period. However, two issues ought to be clarified.

First, liberals who oppose extension merely because the Right is "where all the action is these days" do not display "particular probity and decorum." A less

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viously self-interested position is sed on history: none of the first 26 ıendments required as long as four ars for ratification, and only three (the th, 16th, and 22nd) needed more than ree years; that the ERA is languishing ter nearly six years bodes ill for its timate success.

Second, your editorialist misreads the onstitution. Not only is two-thirds the rong fraction of states which must ›prove amendments, but a convention ıay not "bypass the ratification proce- ure entirely." Article Five clearly states ıat all amendments, whether proposed y the Congress or a constitutional ›nvention, must be "ratified by the gislatures of three-fourths of the everal states, or by conventions in ıree-fourths thereof."

Jonathan L. Entin
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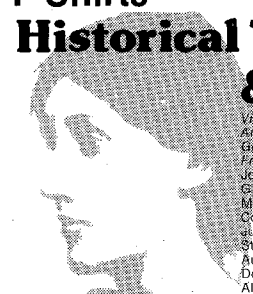

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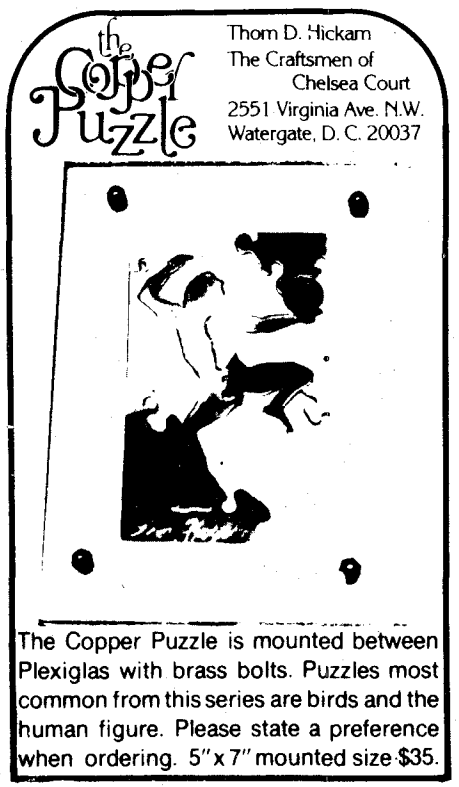

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The press, as we know, is just bristling with integrity these days. There was a major outbreak of bristling in Tehran during President Carter's recent fly-through, when it was discovered that the Shah had had the audacity to attempt to pay for the news hounds' hotel rooms. "The Saudis tried the same thing," Edward Walsh reported indignantly in *The Washington Post*, but with a great waving of credit cards at the hotel clerk in Riyadh the press corps asserted its right not be trifled with in this manner. Once safely back in Western civilization, Haynes Johnson of the *Post* published an open letter to Carter, cold and very blunt, stating his opinion of such nefarious oriental practices: "Some of my friends got a little upset when the Shah tried to pick up everyone's hotel bill. You might want to ask your protocol chief to slip the word delicately that some of our people prefer to pay their own way." Well golly, boys. Integrity's a wonderful thing, but let's not pretend that these grand gestures of righteous indignation come at any personal cost. Those were the bosses' credit cards you were waving around, weren't they?

While these primitive morality plays were being acted out halfway around the world, our own Tad Szulc was telling a similar story to the House committee investigating CIA involvement with the media. Tad, who is legendary for both the number and variety of his sources and the scrupulous honesty of his expense accounts, testified that he occasionally had lunch with intelligence agents during his years as a diplomatic correspondent for *The New York Times*, but he never let a spook pick up the tab. It all reminds me of the scene in Evelyn Waugh's *Scoop* where the foreign correspondents stuck covering a nonexistent war in Ishmaelia quarrelled graciously over whose boss would pick up the next round of drinks at the local watering hole. The point, with the Shah and with the CIA, is the same; it is a fairly modest triumph of integrity to refuse to accept for free something you aren't going to pay for in any event. Now let us consider the problem from the opposite vantage point. What is the proper way to corrupt the morals of a journalist? One elementary principle that suggests itself immediately is that there is little point in offering him something that is of no value to him. Not surprisingly, this seems to have eluded both the Shah and the CIA. Finally, let us consider the financial effect of these transactions. As with the moral effect, there is less here than meets the eye. Tad refuses to let the CIA buy him lunch. Instead, he bills lunch for two to *The New York Times*. The *Times* deducts this expense from its income tax, meaning that Uncle Sam kicks in about 48 cents on the dollar after all. In effect, the government has paid for the agent's lunch and the *Times* has paid for Tad's, which is as it should be. Of course it was the CIA's original investment in 1953 that put the Shah in a position to pay for the hotel rooms of reporters on Carter's trip, whereas the US government is financing about half of their principled stand when the reporters refuse the Shah's generosity. It used to be said that there's no such thing as a free lunch. In the world of journalism, the modern truth seems to be that there's almost no way to pay for your own.

Is some headline writer on the *Times* out to make James Reston look ridiculous? Why else would someone entitle one of Reston's efforts, "Whither the World?"? I admit that his column of New Year's Day was—even for Reston—a remarkably generalized set of reflections. Reston's vast multitude of loyal readers looks for no more in his columns than the assurance that imponderables are still being pondered, or at most a description of what the weather has been like in Washington ("It was cloudy in our town last week . . . "). But surely someone who is actually paid to read these essays ought to be expected to divine at least the remnants of a more concrete pattern of thought.

The policeman's lot is a happier one than it used to be. The District of Columbia police chief, Maurice Cullinane, is about to retire at age 45. For the rest of his life he will receive "disability" payments of at least $31,000 a year from the DC government, because he was kicked in the knee by a demonstrator in 1968. Because of an absurd provision of the Federal income tax laws, such disability payments—unlike normal pensions—are tax-free. It turns out (according to Ron Shaffer in the *Post*) that 82 percent of Washington's retired police and fire fighters are on "disability" rather than normal pensions. Disability entitles you to two-thirds of your retiring salary—tax free, mind you—and your pension keeps going up along with the salaries of active officers. The normal retirement provisions for the unfortunate percent are not quite this generous, b the overall result is that the avera retiree is 45 years old, has worked on t force for 19 years, contributed $14,0 toward retirement and can be expect to collect $700,000 over his lifetim Meanwhile in New York, the poli department has decided to toughen its blood donation policy by giving poli who "donate" their blood only one pai day off as a reward, instead of two a formerly. I don't know what New Yor City pays its police, but I suspect that th sacrifice of one day's paid labor is rather extravagant method of extrac ting a pint of blood that sells comme cially for about $15.

The censorship practices of the com mercial television networks are regula ly ridiculed for denying us the pleasur of seeing or hearing in the comfort o our homes things that we can see or hea all the time right on the streets o Anytown, USA (or even—properl tarted up in period costumes—on th public TV station just a dial's flick away But there is evidence in the currer *Rolling Stone* that the network taste testers occasionally may perform valuable service after all. Associat editor David Felton has "demanded (haven't heard that word in a while), an received, space to "reply" to a recer television special celebrating *Rollin Stone*'s 10th anniversary. Felton charge that the show was overcommercialize He objects in particular to CBS's guttin of a medley of Beatles songs, in whic he'd apparently invested much though and passion. "We were hoping for serious symbolic portrayal of th cultural changes that had occurred i the last ten years, using Beatles songs a a device. For example, we suggested tha people resembling Patty Hearst' parents sing 'She's Leaving Home,' a allusion not just to the Hearst affair bu to all the young who left their home and their old, corrupt ways of life. W wanted 'Happiness Is a Warm Gun' sun to newsreel footage of the Cambodi bombing or Kent State. Charles Manso should be represented by 'Maxwell' Silver Hammer,' et cetera." Et Cetera The same issue contains a charmin observation by Frank Zappa, of a people: "Rock journalism is people wh can't write interviewing people wh can't talk for people who can't read."

M.E.K

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The Ultimate Threat To Academic Freedom

Leon Knight is a college teacher, an officer of the Minnesota Democratic Party and an unabashed liberal. He is also opposed to compulsory unionism—which places him on the enemies list of the National Education Association.

In 1968-69, Knight served as president of the faculty association at North Hennepin Community College in suburban Minneapolis. He fully supports the right of everyone to join and participate in labor unions. But he draws the line at compulsory affiliation.

"The big difference," he says, "between the faculty association I headed up and the union there now is the issue of voluntary versus compulsory."

After the faculty association became an affiliate of the militant NEA, the association backed legislation requiring compulsory union fees for public employees. Once passed, it was decided all faculty members would have to pay a fee to keep their jobs. Knight's liberal philosophy wouldn't allow him to go along.

"The idea of academic freedom," he explains, "the idea of the dissident person, the idea of a person who marches to a different drum, is very precious. And yet unionism is coming in and saying I must march to that drum."

"If they can determine," he stresses, "not what I teach in the classroom, but whether I teach at all, that is the ultimate threat to academic freedom."

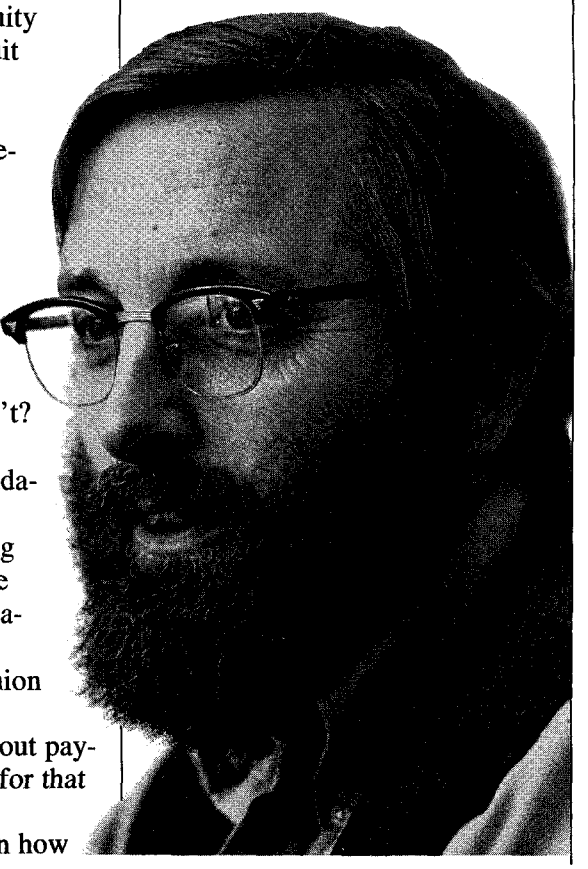
Leon Knight went to court to protect his Constitutional rights. With the help of the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation, he and 19 other members of the Minnesota Community College system brought suit against the NEA and its local affiliates. The suit challenges the forced representation and compulsory fee provisions of Minnesota's Public Employment Labor Relations Act.

Leon Knight was fortunate. He found help. But how many other Leon Knights in America haven't?

The National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation is helping everyone it can. It is currently assisting individual workers in more than 75 cases involving academic freedom, political freedom, freedom from union violence, and the right to work for government without paying a private organization for that privilege.

For more information on how you can help American educators like Leon Knight write:

The National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation
Suite 600
8316 Arlington Boulevard
Fairfax, Va. 22038



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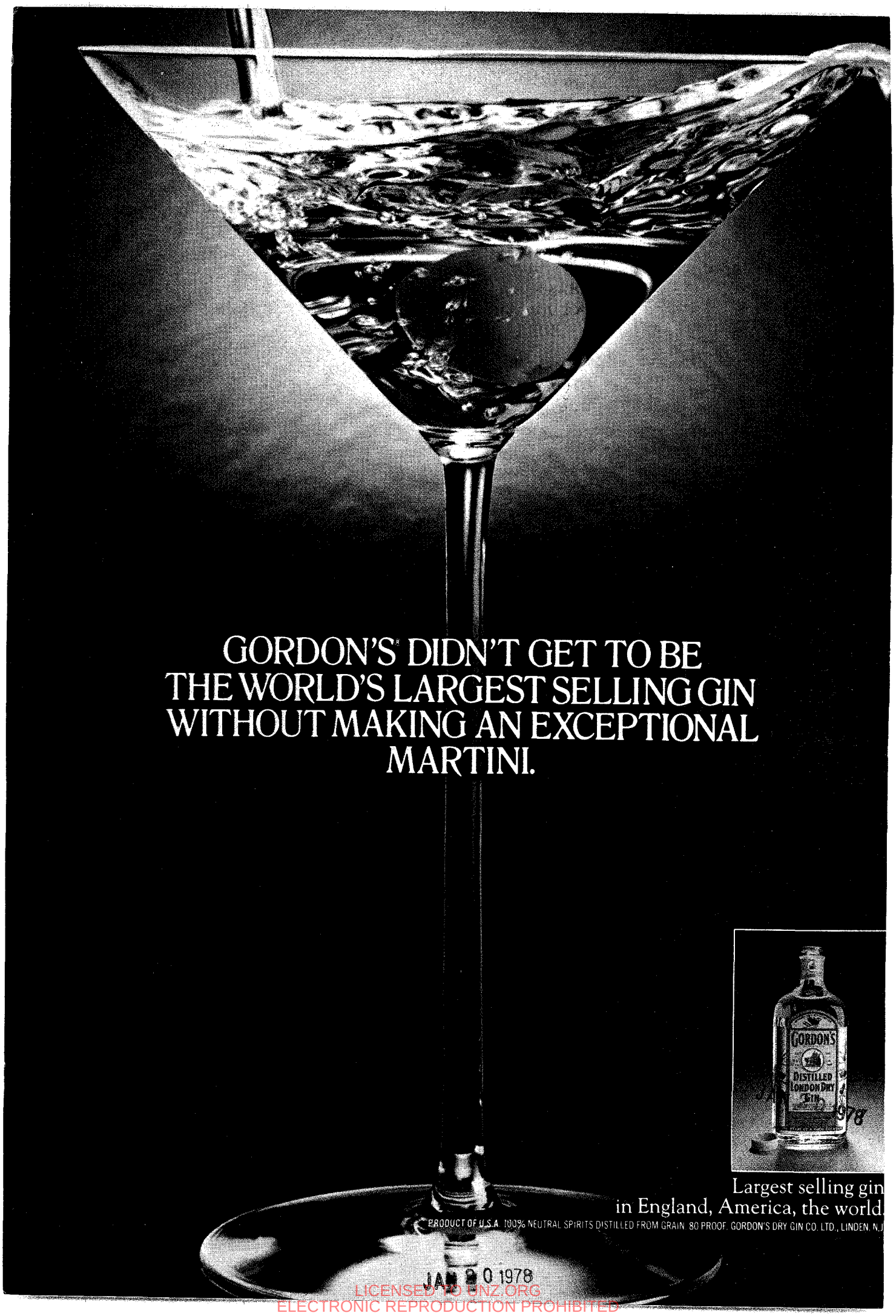

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